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Palestinian Affairs

Commentary Questions U.S. Seriousness Toward PLO

LD0904234391 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The following question poses itself: Is the United States serious about trying to solve the Palestinian question? The movement of U.S. diplomacy suggests that it is. The imperialist propaganda machine is anxious to pursue this diplomacy and to surround it with reports, speculations, and predictions.

It is strange that the Israeli leadership should partake in this campaign through negotiations around the world. The Israelis make sure that they issue an official communique on every U.S. political move made by any White House or State Department official or even on articles published in THE NEW YORK TIMES or THE WASHINGTON POST.

All this might suggest that the United States is serious about bring about a peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict. The truth, however, is not that simple as the history of the Middle East has seen many such political plays staged by the U.S. Administration, which, it became clear later, lacked genuine intentions to search for a peaceful and just solution to the Palestinian question and to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Why should we believe Washington's intentions today? Does it want us to believe that it is the awaited messenger of peace who is poised to solve a chronic conflict endured, due to successive U.S. policies sympathetic to Israel, from Johnson until today?

Some would prefer to believe the U.S. intentions on the strength of the outcome of events in the Gulf departing from the premise that the U.S. NATO offensive against Iraq, which took place under the UN Security Council flag, reflects a new era in world history; an era called the new world order which tries to make of the UN Security Council resolutions a style for the 21st century.

However, there is an apparent difference between the two orientations. Such a difference underlines the credibility of describing the U.S. policy as one of double standards. In the case of the Gulf crisis, Baker went to the UN Security Council to impose the solution on Iraq, making use of all possible means. In the case of the Middle East and the Palestinian question, Baker did not alter Washington's diplomatic habits. He went to the region and closed doors on the UN Security Council, thus following in the footsteps of Nixon, Ford, Carter, and other U.S. presidents who had worked toward partial solutions that basically rested on the idea of tearing apart the Arab camp first, then proceeding to destroy the PLO.

It is too early to show even cautious optimism vis-a-vis Washington's peace intentions. The results of the Gulf war could be, contrary to all analyses, an (?excuse) for the United States to direct its repression entirely against the Palestinian question. The U.S. Administration's political achievements, particularly on the Arab and Middle eastern stage, are more of a negative factor than otherwise and will compel that administration to lose interest in finding fundamental solutions to the conflict.

Perhaps the U.S. intentions derive from a desire to see more positive results in Israel's favor on the level of relations with the Arab regimes. Regional security plans could be perceived in the light of that objective. These plans try to achieve an historical political deal which will open the doors of the region for Israel, under the umbrella of building the new world order, and simultaneously close them all in the face of the Palestinians.

Washington's sole declared objective is ignoring the PLO. In fact, its objective is to escalate the campaign of animosity against it, which reflects the absence of serious intentions to find a peaceful and just solution to the Palestinian question and the deep-seated desire to mobilize all the efforts of aggression in the service of destroying the Palestinians' hopes for the achievement of their national, just objectives.

Commentary Criticizes Iranian Actions in Iraq

LD0404225691 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1602 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] From the scent of the gunpowder: As one observes events in the north and the south of Iraq one notices that the events consist of successive waves of attacks, acts of violence, and sabotage. The source of these waves has become specific. It appears the Iranian-Iraqi border is the starting point of the waves of infiltrators of rebels, traitors, and agents who raise the banners of factional and sectarian battles aimed at the Arabism of Iraq and the unity of its people and territory.

These Iranian actions are condemned even without the presence of U.S. and NATO forces occupying Iraq and [word indistinct] the Arabian Gulf. How then can Iran come forth seeking the help of the umbrella of the (?U.S. forces), their plans and plots. The Lebanonization of Iraq might be the new Iranian objective. [words indistinct] infiltration into Iraqi territory does not mean Tehran has symnpathy for the Kurdish people or its backing of their independence demands. Such an objective is a threat to Iran's unity itself before anyone else. It is because Iran has Kurds on its territory and twice as many as in Iraq.

Revenge might be the aim (?that stems) from racial motives or a desire to weaken Baghdad's [word indistinct] in order to enter into a drawn out battle that leads to [words indistinct] and realizing Persian expansionist ambitions.

Whatever the size of the events on Iraqi soil, signs have emerged of a political agreement that embraces the United States, Iran, and other Arab states, aimed at achieving what the war could not achieve directly, that is, to overthrow the

regime of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. This may confirm the truth of the predictions which appeared in the last few weeks on the existence of an agreement that dates before the war, between Tehran on the one hand and the coalition states on the other, aimed at not stopping the shooting except at the gates of Baghdad; that is, there is another Irangate or Iraqi [word indistinct].

The interest of the United States is clear in such an agreement. It permits this country to impose all its terms on Iraq beginning with the dismantling of the missiles and ending with the destruction of the military factories and decreasing the size of the army. All this, if achieved, will in our own view lead to the overthrow of the Iraqi regime.

The last days have shown with bitterness the situation which Iraq has reached. Its pan-Arab free regime stands alone in the arena confronting the entire world. We are in an age where there is no place for the Arab League, the will of the family of nations, or the camp of friends or neutrals.

Fayiz Abu-Rahmah on Gaza Municipal Council Plans

PM0504103491 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 2 Apr 91 pp 1, 4

[Zaki Shihab report: "Fayiz Abu-Rahmah Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: We Are Seeking To Hold Democratic Election To Form Municipal Council In Gaza"]

[Excerpt] Fayiz Abu-Rahmah, former doyen of lawyers in the Gaza Strip, has stated his intention to run for the leadership of a new municipal council for the area.

Abu-Rahmah, who is currently on a visit to Cairo, said in a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that he would discuss the matter with the Egyptian officials with whom he will meet. This, in addition to issues concerning housing and securing loans from the Islamic Development Bank for citizens in the Gaza Strip.

Abu-Rahmah revealed that the Israeli military governor-general and some employees in his administration have hinted at the importance of the existence of a municipal council. He added: We say that democratic elections must be held to that end.

Asked about the municipal council's expected role in political activities and talks on the Gaza Strip's behalf, he said: Municipal councils are usually involved in municipal matters and political affairs. They can make political decisions that are consistent with the general Palestinian line defined by the PLO. No organization can deviate from that direction.

With regard to the position on the election issue held by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], which enjoys widespread support in the sector, he said: Hamas has its own political theory which says that it wants to liberate the whole of Palestine. So this conflicts with what is proposed by the PLO, which, in accordance with the [Palestine] National Council resolutions, decided to accept the UN resolutions.

He said that any future elections will not be political elections, will be confined to municipal bodies, and will strengthen the position of those who can rescue these organs and those who support the PLO.

Abu-Rahmah said that there is a pressing need to settle the question of forming a municipal council capable of serving people and the municipality, especially since services have deteriorated in the past few years. [passage omitted]

Urges Talks With Israel

PM1004083491 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Apr 91 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Abu-Rahmah Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: We Are Ready for Direct Negotiations With Israel"]

[Text] Cairo, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT bureau—Fayiz Abu-Rahmah, former doyen of Palestinian lawyers, has announced the willingness of the Palestinians residing both inside and outside [the occupied territories] to accept the current idea regarding the establishment of a demilitarized security zone between Israel and the West Bank. This is in addition to the Palestinians' willingness to enter into direct or indirect negotiations with Israel to arrive at a peaceful solution to the Palestinian issue. In an exclusive statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, he added his willingness and that of the other Palestinian leaderships to agree to the continued residence of Jewish settlers in the West Bank, as long as there are borders for the Palestinian state and autonomy is established for Palestinians inside the area.

Abu-Rahmah, who is currently in Cairo, said that the Palestinian leaderships in the occupied territories have received no reply to the request that they submitted to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker when they met with him during his recent visit to the region—the request concerning the need for the United States to implement UN resolutions in the Gaza Strip, as it did in the Gulf crisis. He pointed out that the United States is currently moving away from double standards and adheres to the uniformity of decisions—which is approved by the various Palestinian leaderships.

Abu-Rahmah opposed the idea of convening a regional conference to resolve the Middle East problem. He said: It will have limited participation, which means that it is bound to produce no result. However, the international conference—by virtue of its broad membership for participants and the presence of many observers—can to some extent reveal anything less than a sincere intention to resolve the issue.

The former doyen of lawyers arrived in Cairo on a visit lasting several days to present a housing plan for the Gaza Strip costing $5 million. The visit is of a political nature and is intended to clear the atmosphere between Egypt and the PLO leadership.

Algeria

Hamrouche Interviewed on Upcoming Elections

LD0904165891 Algiers APS in English 1135 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Algiers, 09/04/91 (APS)—The head of government, Mouloud Hamrouche, granted Monday an interview to REUTERS news agency, in which he announced that he would be candidate of the reforming FLN [National Liberation Front] in the forthcoming legislative elections due on June 27, 1991. Hamrouche, who predicted a victory of a coalition of democrats in the legislative elections in front of the Islamists, considers that the democrats have great chances of realizing a democratic consensus which he consides as imperative after the legislative elections.

The head of government considers that 15 million electors will have to choose between the camps formed by Islamists and democrats gathered around the FLN, an ally of "reason" of two or three most important parties of the pro-demcratic opposition. The opinion, he said, is oriented towards two currents: a strong current which has always opted for Algeria of patriots, who look towards the future without denying their religion or their rich past. This current, he said, is found within three or four parties including the FLN.

The second main current, the head of government noted, is the religious one. They have a large echo when they talk about an Islam of faith and moral rules. But, he said, they do not find any echo from the part of the majority of the population when they deal with the daily life, the management of the life of citizens.

The head of government denies having played for a bipolarization between his party and the fundamentalists, forcing thus the hand of democrats for an alliance "of objective necessity". In spite of the victory of the Islamists in the local elections of June 12, 1990, the head of government considers that the political audience of Islamists is limited to an important hard nucleus of fundamentalists who "merely want to impose their rules of behaviour to the majority of Algerians. But, he noted, the later have had the occasion to judge their limited capacity to find solutions to shortages, mainly the problems of housing and employment". A rapprochement between some components of the democratic current in the new elected assembly around a common program whose premises have been laid by 18 months of work of his government, is not excluded, noted Hamrouche who said that "this current has more chances, in light of its common points, to gather before or during the electoral campaign. Anyway, it is condemned to meet after the elections".

Moreover, the head of government said that the elections will be held in calmness in spite of the criticisms of the eight parties and the Islamists who separately threaten to call for a general strike if the electoral law is not modified.

Before the announcement of the date of the legislative elections "everyone developed a demagogical discourse of systematic opposition and overbiddings. Now everyone must develop a discourse of government, of management of a crisis and of the country", said the head of government who predicted that "things are going to be clear within two weeks as the maximum". Those who claim anticipated presidential elections are those who escape the issue, at the approach of the time of electoral truth as they are short of ideas and social basis [sentence as received]. They are afraid of telling the truth to their opinion because they neither [have] any program nor any other solution". The opinion is not dupe, the head of government said.

Dealing with reforms, the head of government said that "even if the political parties are opposed to these reforms, they are certain that it is difficult to find a government to do this job", underlining in this context the liberalization of trade and the new financial and monetary laws and orientations opening the way to the convertibility fo the dinar.

However, Hamrouche said he was surprised by the slow arrival of foreign capitals and the Western indifference towards the first democratic experience in the Arab world. "I hope, he said, that men and decision makers of the two sides will not let themselves be guided by prejudices and will try together by dialogue and consultation to bring their country closer and find mutually profitable fields of cooperation".

Islamic Renaissance Party Denies FLN Alliance

LD0904174891 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Political activities have started preparations for the early legislative election, overshadowed by pluralism. The head of government, Mouloud Hamrouche, has opened the electoral battle by announcing, in an interview with REUTERS, that he will stand in the coming elections for the reformist FLN [National Liberation Front]. In his interview with the British News Agency REUTERS, Mr. Hamrouche went on to predict the victory of the alliance of democrats over the Islamists in the coming elections. He said: The democrats have great chances of achieving a democratic consensus after the elections.

In Mr. Hamrouche's view, alliance is possible between the FLN and other parties, with two or three important opposition parties "supporting the democrats", as he put it.

These remarks have raised a number of questions. There are even those who say that the FLN may enter into alliance with the Socialist Forces Front [FFS] or with the Movement for Democracy as the Algerian AL-JUMHURIYAH has alluded to today. The same daily spoke about a rapprochment between the FLN and the Islamic Renaissance [Nahdha] Movement, quoting a written statement by Abderrazak Bou Hara, in which he

confirms that he has met with the leader of the Renaissance Movement. It was considered that the meeting falls within the framework of contacts between the two parties to enter into an alliance.

To investigate the truth of the matter, colleague Karimah 'Isani contacted Mr. Djaballah [Islamic Renaissance Movement leader], and we have this recording:

[Begin Djaballah recording] In the name of God the compassionate and the merciful, first, the source of this daily's report is the DJISOUR, which first carried the news that I met Mr. Bou Hara to set up an alliance between the Renaissance and the FLN. This news has no foundation of truth. It is mere lies and fabrication. I do not deny that I met Mr. Bou Hara before because he and I are from the same area and we meet occasionally on a friendly basis. The idea of an alliance with the FLN does not exist, and we did not touch upon it in our talks at all. This report is therefore false. [end recording]

Egypt

Nation's Principles for Mideast Peace Reported

NC0904183191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1638 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 9 Apr (MENA)—The MENA correspondent has learned that Egypt's stance on the efforts to promote peace in the Middle East is based on several basic principles.

Foremost among these are: First, Egypt believes that an international conference for peace is the appropriate political framework to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, provided that the conference is well prepared and convened at the proper time in order to enhance its chances of success.

Second, Egypt rejects the Israeli initiatives to hold bilateral talks between it and every Arab country separately.

Third, Egypt believes that the land-for-peace principle is a basic principle in the search for a just, comprehensive, and lasting solution in the region.

Fourth, it is necessary to emphasize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, to establish an independent state, and to freely choose their representatives.

Fifth, it is necessary for Israel to stop building settlements in the occupied territories and housing immigrant Jews in these territories.

Possible Regional Peace Conference Discussed

NC0904175391 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 6 Apr 91 p 18

[From the "Stands" column by Anis Mansur]

[Text] Wait and see what Bush will be doing about the peace conference on the Middle East and for the Middle East.

We must separate the Gulf peace from the Middle East peace. The first is one kind of peace, and the second is another.

We will soon be dragged into the trivialities of dictionaries that have recently been printed in Washington and London, and in cheap and popular editions in Moscow. The United States wants a regional peace. This is the kind of peace Moscow was promised it could participate in if it supported Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Everything the United States wanted has happened. It has been said that this conference will take place in a few months in Cairo or Ankara. It will be attended by Egypt, Syria, Israel, Jordan, and Palestine. The first and biggest problem is: Who will be the participating Palestinians? Israel rejects the PLO. Therefore, there will have to be another kind of Palestinian; but of course, they will have to have some connection with the PLO. Exactly like the Palestinians who met with Baker in Israel. Israel also makes it a condition that the conference should not be under the supervision of the United Nations. The most important topic to be presented to this conference is stopping the arms race in the Middle East. The Middle East countries saw the grandest fashion show of weapons—by air, land, and sea—during the Gulf war. The Gulf states have asked for weapons amounting to 23 billion [currency not specified] from the countries that produce and sell arms. These are the same countries that want peace in the Middle East.

Now no one is surprised that the countries that are fighting and destroying are, at the same time, the countries building and calling for peace. They are the countries that give you weapons and teach you how to use them, while at the same time inflate you and tell you how sweet you are, how wonderful, how great, how muscular and brave you are, until you explode from this false inflation, like Saddam did, and fight back. Then they strike you down and destroy your intellect. After that, they demand expenses for the war and reconstruction.

It is expected that Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states will participate [in the peace conference]. America's first and only hope is that the conference will lead to the end of the war with Israel, starting with Saudi Arabia, who was hit by missiles, just like Israel.

Commentary Views Baker's Visit to Israel

NC0904151791 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1240 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Ahmad Sha'ban commentary: "Baker's Talks in Israel and Israel's Extreme Stance."]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's previous Middle East tour less than a month ago was an exploratory one whose purpose was to listen to Israeli and Palestinian views in particular, and the views of other

parties connected with the crisis in general. His current tour will focus on basic discussions seeking to resolve outstanding issues and to attain specific Israeli and Palestinian views in an attempt to promote a solution.

It is necessary at this point to examine the views of Israel, particularly those that surfaced in the past few hours while Israel was waiting for the arrival of the U.S. secretary of state. According to reports, intensive diplomatic activity took place among the Israeli leaders, especially between the prime minister and the defense and fore.gn ministers. After these meetings, it was reported that the prime minister announced that Israel agrees in principle to hold a regional conference and to make a new pledge to implement UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. These stands can been seen as positive. Israel, however, has reservations on these two points. The Israelis point out that the regional conference will not be held under UN supervision and that it must not produce effective resolutions; rather, it must be a short cut to bilateral talks between Israel and the Arabs. Israeli statements, moreover, continue to reject the land-for-peace principle.

Another negative Israeli phenomenon has been Israeli Construction and Housing Minister Sharon's announcement that houses will continue to be built in the settlements in the occupied territories. While it is true that Sharon announced that these houses will be allocated to Israelis citizens and not to the new Soviet immigrants, this does not alter the Israeli insistence on building new settlements. The United States opposes this attitude and observers have noted that Secretary Baker is not comfortable with Sharon's statements.

While the majority of these stands constitute a negative phenomenon at the time of Baker's visit to Israel, Israel has recently made a positive gesture. This was the Israeli Defense Ministry's announcement that it will release more than 1,000 Palestinian prisoners as a goodwill gesture on the eve of 'Id al- Fitr feast. The Israeli ministry also announced that it will reopen the Palestinian universities and will grant tax concessions to new commercial ventures in occupied Gaza.

Naturally we cannot view these various stands as contradictory. Rather they can be viewed as attempts to leave room for maneuvering during the talks with the U.S. secretary of state so that Israel will not be subjected to U.S. pressures during the talks.

As to the Palestinian side, Palestinian elements inside and outside the occupied territories have affirmed their willingness to hold a dialogue with Israel. It must be noted in this connection that the Palestinians inside the occupied territories met with Secretary Baker during his first visit to Israel. Another such meeting is expected during the current visit.

The basic problem in connection with all current events is represented by Israel's extremism and rejection, or to put it more accurately, by the conditions which Israel is setting for holding a dialogue with the Palestinians. Will Secretary Baker succeed in his current tour in surmounting some obstacles which prevent an Israeli-Palestinian dialogue and, consequently, in paving the way for a solution of the entire issue?

Austrian Foreign Minister Arrives 10 Apr

NC1004100891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0808 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 10 Apr (MENA)—Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock arrived in Cairo early this morning on a two-day visit to Egypt, during which he will meet with President Husni Mubarak.

Mock will also hold talks with Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, to review bilateral relations, exchange views on developments in the Middle East, and determine what Austria can offer to alleviate the damage Egypt sustained because of the Gulf war. During his visit, the Austrian minister will attend a meeting by the Austrian ambassadors accredited to the Middle East and Gulf countries to review ways to promote economic and trade cooperation between Austria and these countries.

Peace Plan Discussed

NC1004134591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1204 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 10 Apr (MENA)—Official talks between Egypt and Austria opened this morning with Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, and Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock.

During the talks, the two ministers reviewed the latest developments in the Middle East and the Gulf following the liberation of Kuwait and in light of the current efforts to achieve security and stability and to resolve the Palestinian issue. The two sides also discussed ways to promote bilateral relations between the two countries in the political, economic, and cultural fields.

MENA has learned that discussion during the meeting touched on a five-point plan proposed by Austria to achieve peace in the Middle East. The five points are:

1. Convening a Middle East conference under the auspices of the United Nations to resolve problems and settle the Arab-Israeli conflict.

2. Convening a conference on security and cooperation in the Middle East, similar to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

3. Imposing some sort of control on arms exports, such as limiting arms sales to the region.

4. Eliminating nuclear weapons, and conventional weapons if possible, in the region.

5. Establishing an Islamic-Western dialogue and examining the possibility of Iran's participation in peace plans in the region.

News Conference Held

NC1004142091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1214 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Cairo, 10 Apr (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has emphasized that Egypt supports the convening of an international peace conference with the participation of all parties concerned and the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. He explained that adequate preparations must be made for such a conference, adding that Egypt supports the implementation of the UN resolutions on the Palestinian issue, as well as the beginning of a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue.

At a joint news conference today with Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock, 'Abd-al-Majid said that the Palestinians will choose their own representatives at the conference and will decide who will speak for them. The righteous of the Palestinian cause is recognized by the world community. It is the Palestinians who will choose their representatives, not Egypt or anyone else.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid stressed that a just and comprhensive peace in the Middle East cannot be achieved under Israeli occupation. Israel must withdraw from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan Heights, and southern Lebanon, which it occupied by force.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that peace is in the interest of all states. He expressed the hope that Israel will cooperate with the peace efforts. The world community must also wholeheartedly support the peace process in the region, he said.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid expressed the hope that the situation will stabilize in Iraq and that Saddam Husayn will stop his actions against the Iraqi people in the north and south of the country.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that the current Arab contacts at the summit and foreign minister levels or within the framework of the Arab League, are aimed at achieving a solution to Arab disputes, finding common ground for cooperation in all fields, and opening a new page in joint Arab action.

For his part, Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock praised Egypt's role during the Gulf war. He pointed out that Egypt has a special importance in the Middle East.

Mock stressed Austria's support for the ongoing efforts to achieve peace and stability in the region.

Regarding Austria's stand on the Palestinian issue, Mock said that Austria supports the convening of an international conference on peace in the Middle East to resolve the Arab-Israeli dispute. It also supports the convening of a conference on cooperation and security among the region's states, similar to the Helsinki Conference on European security and cooperation.

The Austrian foreign minister also stressed the importance of arms limitation in the region and the removal of weapons of mass destruction. He also stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation among Arab, Islamic, and Western states.

Libya

Mubarak, Delegation Arrive in Libya 9 Apr

NC0904163491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1621 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Tripoli, 9 Apr (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak arrived in Tripoli for a visit to the Libyan Jamahiriyah this afternoon. Brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan revolution, and a number of senior Libyan officials received his excellency at the airport.

Accompanying President Mubarak on his visit to Tripoli is a delegation that comprises Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister; Safwat al-Sharif, minister of information; Engineer Sulayman Mutawalli, minister of transport, communications, and maritime transport; Engineer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Wahhab, minister of industry; Dr. Usamah al-Baz, director of the president's office for political affairs and the Foreign Ministry's first under secretary; and Dr. Mustafa al-Fiqi, director of the president's office for information.

Visit Al-Rabitah Complex

LD0904215491 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Excerpt] This evening the brother leader of the revolution, accompanied by Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, visited the technical workshops of the Al-Rabitah industrial complex.

During the visit, the brother leader of the revolution and President Mubarak heard detailed briefings of the accomplishments of the great al-Fatih Revolution. [passage omitted]

Meets With Al-Qadhdhafi

NC0904194791 Cairo Egyptian Space Channel in Arabic 1900 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Excerpts] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak arrived in Tripoli for a visit to the Libyan Jamahiriyah today. [passage omitted]

Brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi hosted a breakfast banquet for President Mubarak at his residence in Tripoli.

The Egyptian-Libyan summit talks began at 2100 this evening, Tripoli time. The Egyptian television correspondent in the Libyan capital has reported that topics to be discussed include the current Arab situation in light of the war to liberate Kuwait, the moves seeking to

establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and the importance of defending the rights of the fraternal Palestinian people. The two leaders are also discussing planned efforts to clear the air in inter-Arab relationships.

President Mubarak and Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi are also discussing ways to bolster Egyptian-Libyan relations in light of the 10 agreements, which the two countries signed within the framework of the Egyptian-Libyan higher joint committee.

The Egyptian ministers will also hold meetings with their Libyan counterparts to discuss ways of implementing the agreements which serve the goals of Egyptian-Libyan cooperation.

More on Meeting

LD0904211491 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] A round of talks was held this evening between the brother leader [al-Qadhdhafi] and President Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The meeting was attended by Staff Major 'Abd-al-Salam Ahmad Jallud and Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, in addition to the members of the Libyan Arab and Egyptian delegations.

Closed Meeting Held

LD1004075591 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0732 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Tripoli, 10 Apr (JANA)—A closed meeting was held last night between the brother leader of the revolution and President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

Delegation Departs

LD1004075691 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0740 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Excerpt] Tripoli, 10 Apr (JANA)—President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and his accompanying delegation left Tripoli early this morning after visiting the great Jamahiriyah. [passage omitted]

Joint Communique Issued

NC1004064591 Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 0500 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak returned to the homeland at 0400 this morning from Tripoli after a 12-hour working visit to Libya, where he held talks with brother leader Mu'ammar al- Qadhdhafi, leader of the Libyan Revolution.

A joint communique was issued on the two leaders' summit. It said: President Muhammad Husni Mubarak of the Arab Republic of Egypt, leading a high-level delegation, has paid a visit to the great Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah. He held intensive talks with his brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the Great 1 September Revolution, on bilateral relations between the two countries and the Arab situation in general. In particular, President Mubarak and brother Colonel al-Qadhdhafi discussed the Arab situation resulting from the Gulf war. They both agreed on the need to work seriously to contain the negative effects of the war and to call on the Arab states to rise above their wounds and disregard the predicament with a view to closing Arab ranks and starting serious Arab action that could enable the Arab nation to proceed toward the future.

In this regard, the two leaders once again emphasized the need to preserve Iraq's unity and territorial integrity, to safeguard its independence and not to interfere in its domestic affairs.

On the bilateral level, President Muhammad Husni Mubarak and brother leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi reviewed what has been accomplished since the Tobruk meeting and subsequent meetings in which agreements were concluded to achieve integration between the two countries and to link their interests in all fields.

The two leaders gave directives to the competent officials in the two countries to proceed with the implementation of the agreements reached in order to mobilize fully the resources available in the two countries, with the ultimate objective of achieving further cohesiveness and integration of the interests of the Arab peoples in both Egypt and the great Jamahiriyah.

Statement Issued on Visit

LD1004103591 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0735 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Tripoli, 10 Apr (JANA)—Engineer 'Ali Abu-Jaryah, secretary of the General People's Committee for Information and Culture, read a press statement following the Libyan-Egyptian talks. The text is as follows:

President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt, paid a brotherly visit to the great Jamahiriyah, accompanied by a high-level delegation. He held intensive and in-depth talks with his brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, leader of the great 1 September revolution, on bilateral relations and the Arab situation in general.

President Mubarak and brother Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi paid particular attention to the Arab situation resulting from the Gulf war. They agreed on the need for serious work in order to contain the negative effects of the war, and to call on the Arab homeland to rise above its wounds and overlook its predicament in order to close the ranks of the Arab homeland and start serious Arab efforts to enable the Arab homeland to proceed into the future.

In this regard, the two leaders again emphasized the need to preserve Iraq's unity and territorial integrity, to safeguard its independence and sovereignty, and not to

interfere in its internal affairs. They agreed on the need for the Iraqi Kurds to return to their homes in peace and security. They also agreed on the provision of humanitarian aid to the fraternal Iraqi people and on assistance to help it overcome its predicament.

On the bilateral level, President Mubarak and brother Colonel al-Qadhdhafi reviewed achievements since the Tubruq meeting and the subsequent agreements to ensure the attainment of integration between the two countries and the linking of their interests in all fields.

The two leaders issued directives to the competent officials in the two countries to proceed with the implementation of what had been agreed upon in order to fully utilize the energies available in the two countries, with a view to achieving further cohesiveness and integration between the interests of the Arab people in Egypt and the great Jamahiriyah.

The great Jamahiriyah expressed its support for the nomination of brother Dr. 'Simat 'Abd-al-Majid for the post of secretary general of the League of Arab States, in light of his competence, expertise, and nationalist feeling.

Morocco

King Hassan II Appoints New Tourism Minister

LD1004033991 Rabat Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Excerpt] King Hassan II, may God make him victorious, accompanied by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Sidi Mohamed, His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid, and His Highness Prince Moulay Hicham, received this evening at the royal palace in Rabat Mr. Abdelkader Benslimane, who his majesty has appointed tourism minister. [passage omitted]

Tunisia

Ben Ali Praises Progress in Human Rights

LD0904115791 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 0921 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Speech by Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali at a ceremony marking Martyrs' Day at the Palace of the Republic in Carthage—live]

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: With all loyalty and pride, today we celebrate this immortal national anniversary, which is dear to the hearts of us all, the anniversary of our dutiful martyrs who sacrificed their lives so that we could enjoy independence and sovereignty and so that Tunisia may live free and strong.

On this glorious occasion and in realization of the decision we announced on the third anniversary of the 7 November [1987] change, we have embarked on the formation of the Higher Committee for Human Rights and Basic Liberties. We wanted it to consist of a number of sons of our dear homeland who are known for their integrity, experience, and ability in the field of human rights and basic liberties and who represent the most important currents of thought with which our society abound. They can assist us with their views and proposals, their research and studies, to bolster human rights and basic liberties and develop them on both the national and international levels.

We have decided to set up this Higher Committee out of our profound belief in the sanctity of human rights and basic liberties, as we have stated on every occasion starting with the 7 November statement in which we affirmed our people's readiness to enjoy a developing political life within the framework of a responsible democracy. Thanks to the maturity and rationalism our people have attained and also out of our belief on guaranteeing their rights and liberties, we will be fulfilling and committing ourselves to the things for which our strugglers sacrificed their lives; and we will also be guaranteeing a rational actual participation in the objectives of development, the bolstering of the foundations of the balanced, sound, and open society, and of the concomitants of the modern state in which the only supremacy is that of the law alone.

Since the change, we have concentrated on taking the initiatives and measures necessary to restore sovereignty to the people and lay the foundations of a state of law. We have also drawn up the legal framework to guarantee the realization of the devloping national charter that adapts to changing social conditions and the challenges they involve.

We have paved the way for political and social forces and intellectual communities, who were unanimous in rallying around the national charter, which we wanted to be a contract of honor among them. Day after day, these forces acquired positions and roles that enabled them to make their contribution.

We have placed human rights and basic liberties at the forefront of our principles and objectives, out of our belief that man will not feel proud to belong to his homeland, or participate in collective work, or believe in the high ideals and sublime national objectives, until his views are viewed, his rights are respected, and his prestige is safeguarded.

On this basis, we have constantly worked to bring about reconciliation among the citizens and the various sections of the community and between society and the state.

We have also worked to bolster civilized society and to ensure that this state shall be truly the state of all Tunisians. We believe that the only measure of excellence and distinction is the extent that every citizen and every section of citizens is able to preform its national duties.

Thus we turned the page of the past with its sufferings and negative aspects, disseminated a climate of hope and optimism, ensured the opening of wide vistas before all, and worked hard to guarantee equal opportunities for all so that the living forces of the country would rise again, and intensify their efforts and determination to realize the desired change on clear, sound, and correct bases.

Gentlemen and ladies, man's personal happiness and his material welfare are closely linked. They cannot be achieved except through the availability of means for an honorable living such as education, health, and work and through the safeguarding of human dignity and personal prestige. There can be no justice, nor freedom, nor security without the necessary material utilities and basic legal and moral guarantees. There can be no stability nor security if the conditions of social, economic, and political balance are shaken.

For this reason, we have paid special attention, in addition to the legal and political measures we have announced and enforced, to the deprived and marginalized factions. We have adopted numerous measures to raise the living standard of youth, children, and the handicapped. We have also committed ourselves to helping poor families, and we have called on all those capable of helping them to contribute to the national solidarity effort.

At the same time, we did not fail to show interest in the rights of our communities abroad and their conditions of work, residence, and living and the strengthening of their ties with their homeland.

We have renewed our commitment to the rights and achievements of women in a way that is sufficient to guarantee them conditions for dignity and participation in the building and cohesiveness of society through the cohesiveness of the family and the upbringing of youth in accordance with good morality, and participation with their efforts alongside men in developmental work.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have achieved much along the path to change, however, our aspirations do not stop. The strengthening of democracy and freedoms, the consolidation of the protection of human rights and the endeavor to broaden their scope and range are continuous efforts: as soon as we conclude certain aspects, new ones appear in accordance with the principle of growth and development.

In this respect, in particular, comes our setting up of this Higher Committee, which stems from our principled choices; responds to the directions upon which our social, economic, and political work is based; and agrees with the United Nations' call for the foundation of a body such as this one. Tunisia, which endorsed without reservation the UN agreement against torture and practices that violate the dignity of mankind and was honored to have been chosen by the United Nations as headquarters for the Arab Human Rights Institute, is continuing its efforts to develop its relations with the institutions working in this sphere in all countries. This is because Tunisia believes that freedoms and human rights are an indivisible whole, and that they cannot be denied or postponed for whatever excuse.

In this context, we opened the way for the establishment in Tunisia of a branch of Amnesty International, established ties with the International Human Rights Institute, and participated at the fringe of the recent session of the UN General Assembly which was crowned with the World Declaration on the Rights of the Child. We have also persisted in organizing national and international meetings and seminars on democracy and freedoms, most recent of which was the seminar held on the occasion of the World Human Rights Day, which provided an opportunity to make them known in all parts of the country.

We are following with interest and appreciation the efforts being made here and there to further awareness of, and respect for, human rights and basic liberties and consolidating them at the national and international levels. Our hope is that all nations will cooperate in this, because we think that the success of these endeavors necessarily calls for an intensification of efforts.

In this context, we must pause at the suffering of the struggling Palestinian people and the repression and inhuman attacks to which it has been subjected for half a century, the intensity of which has increased since the start of the brave Intifadah against repression, discrimination, insults, and denial of the most basic rights.

On this occasion, we reaffirm our support for the causes of right, justice, and liberation in all parts of the world. We call upon all dynamic consciences to work together to eliminate injustice and oppression wherever they are. We also call upon the members of this committee, whom we wish success in their work, to perform what has been entrusted to them at the national level in the best possible way and to make a contribution at the international level in a way that guarantees our country its worthy place among nations and achieves the aims for which the martyrs sacrificed their pure blood and for which the fighters and strugglers have struggled. Foremost of these aims are the guaranteeing of freedom and dignity to citizens, along with the impregnability and prosperity of the homeland.

May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you. [applause]

Appoints Human Rights Committee

LD0904164291 Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 0912 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] In the name of God the merciful and the compassionate. In faithfulness to the memories of the martyrs who sacrificed themselves so that Tunisia enjoys impregnability and independence, and so that Tunisians, men and women, live with pride and dignity, with their rights and freedoms guaranteed; in completion of what they

had been martyred for; in implementation of [the following] bills: Decree No. 54 for the year 1991 dated on 7 January 1991 in connection with the higher body for human rights and basic freedoms, especially Articles 3 and 4 of the aforementioned decree:

His excellency the president of the Republic has signed two decrees according to which the chairman and the members of the Higher Committee of Human Rights and Basic Liberties have been appointed.

Mr. Rachid Driss, chairman, and the members are as follows: Amor Bejaoui; Mohamed Hedfi; Hassib Ben Ammar; Mohamed Talbi; H'souna Ben Ayed; Zakaria Ben Mustapha; Abdelouahab Bouhdiba; Sadok Belaid; Mohamed Mahfoudh; Salah El Haja; Brahim Gharbi; Ahmed Chtourou; Hedi Ghodhbani; Mrs. Sarra Chaabouni; Said Bourguiba; Bechir Laarabi; Mrs. Nour el Houda Gharbi; and Brahim Chabbouh.

The ministries' representatives to the higher body for human rights and basic freedoms are:

Mr. Ismail (?Ayaril), for the Ministry of Justice; Mr. Mohamed Yasir, for the Foreign Ministry; Mr. Ridha Hajri, for the Interior Ministry; Mr. Abderraouf Mahbouli, for the Ministry of Education and Sciences; Mr. Khaireddine Abdelali, for the Ministry of Public Health; Mr. Youssef Alouane, for the Ministry of Social Affairs; Mrs. Sa'ida Ghrib, for the Ministry of Youth and Childhood; and Mr. Abdelbaki (?Dhati), for the Secretariat of State for Information.

Bahrain

Iranian Envoy on Ties With GCC, Events in Iraq

NC0604201291 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0823 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Text] Manama, 6 Apr (WAKH)—Iranian Ambassador to Bahrain Javad Torkabadi has expressed his optimism about future relations between the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries and Iran. He said that the contacts between the two parties created a good image, and we are optimistic that the GCC and Iran will meet and agree on views soon. In a statement published today in the Bahraini newspaper AL-AYYAM, he described Saudi-Iranian concord as a promising principle that both countries accepted and that make us optimistic about the future.

Torkabadi said that outlining the nature of relations between Iran and the GCC is making good progress. He noted that there is a tendency to reach an agreement on these outlines. He pointed out that the date and venue of the meeting of the GCC and Iranian foreign ministers has not yet been set. The meeting will be similar to the one that was held between the two sides in New York.

Regarding Iran's position during the Gulf war, the Iranian ambassador said that Iran adopted a neutral position out of its faith that this war was not a holy war as the Iraqi president claimed, but for ambitions above which the entire region must rise.

Concerning the Iraqi aircraft in Iran, the Iranian ambassador said that Iraq requested permission for Iraqi civil aircraft to use Iranian airports, and we agreed to this request on the premise that these aircraft are the property of the Iraqi people. The military aircraft, however, did not land with our approval. Their landing was a surprise to the point that some of them landed on streets in Iran and others crashed or were destroyed. He pointed out that Iran did not allow these aircraft to be used during the war.

Regarding the ongoing events in Iraq, the Iranian ambassador said: "What is going on in Iraq is an internal affair in which Iran has no business. Our stand is to comply with Iraq's unity and not to interfere in Iraq's affairs."

Kuwait

Commentaries Discuss Amir's 7 Apr Speech

AL-ANBA' Gives Praise

PM0904154691 Cairo AL-ANBA' in Arabic 9 Apr 91 pp 1-2

[Editorial: "An Interpretation of the Speech by His Highness the Amir: Challenges And Future Orientations"—formerly Kuwait AL-ANBA']

[Excerpts] Like his September UN speech—a landmark in the liberation march, both in terms of affirming the fixed Kuwaiti principles in rejecting the occupation and in terms of mobilizing international support to end the Iraqi aggression by all military and political means—his highness the amir's speech the day before yesterday was a main landmark in the march to build the new Kuwait. He dotted the i's and crossed the t's vis-a-vis the orientations of the next stage, very openly specifying the current challenges and how to tackle them. [passage omitted]

His highness the amir devoted a major part of his speech to internal issues. On this subject, his highness was specific in listing the priorities. Regarding urgent issues, his highness stressed the return of the other Kuwaiti POW's, which is undoubtedly a subject of the utmost attention on the people's part. His highness made it clear beyond any doubt that the state will not rest until all the POW's return to their families. Martyrs' families will be fully looked after as soon as possible by means of urgent amiri decrees.

In addition to this urgent issue, his highness the amir drew up the general orientations—political, economic, and social. The political orientation was represented by a statement of commitment to the restoration of parliamentary life next year, together with the earnest intention to grant women their political rights. The economic and social orientation was represented by the alleviation of burdens on citizens by canceling their debts to commercial banks and the Credit Bank.

An examination of the two orientations—the political, democratic orientation and the economic, social orientation—undoubtedly requires further objective analysis and calm and rational discussion. But simply the move in that direction proves that the Kuwaiti leadership is fully aware of the feeling on the streets of Kuwait and responding to it with all its resources. Canceling citizens' debts to the banks is a step which has never been taken by any state in the world since World War II. That includes the developed states. All they did was provide some facilities, that's all.

What is important here is not just canceling their the debts. But this is an indication of other measures on which the Kuwaiti leadership will embark to alleviate citizens' burdens in the various fields. This is a quick overall interpretation of the substance of his highness the amir's speech. It requires a more thorough interpretation of each individual point. The speech is a comprehensive document covering all aspects of the next stage, with all its challenges and responsibilities.

London Paper Reviews Speech

PM0904160191 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT AL-DUWALI in Arabic 9 Apr 91 p 1

[Muhammad Musa'id al-Salih article: "The Priorities in His Highness' Speech"]

[Excerpts] In his first speech since his return to liberated Kuwait, His Highness the Amir of Kuwait spoke about the 2 August 1990 events and their repercussions, recalling the Kuwaiti people's heroism against the occupation authorities. [passage omitted]

On matters of reform or change, speeches by heads of state are noticeably made in general terms, because they cannot cover every little detail as the details are very often covered when the laws reflecting the wishes of the head of state are promulgated. In his speech the head of state gave top priority to the restoration of stability, the start of a normal living process, and Kuwaitees' return to their homeland, which is a central issue relating to many details which cannot be included in one speech. The amir gave equal importance in his speech to the restoration of parliamentary life in accordance with what was agreed at the people's conference held in Jeddah in October. The head of state set 1992 as the date for the restoration of parliamentary life and parliamentary elections under the Constitution. We believe that setting the month or day is usually something for governments to do, particulary when, as is the case here, the matter is linked to people who hold second class citizenship. That ugly distinction will, we hope, be abolished after study, for all Kuwaitis (first and second class) have demonstrated their refusal to cooperate with the Iraqi occupation authorities. [passage omitted]

There is also the question of women's participation in parliamentary life so that they could, as his highness said in his speech, play a constructive part in society and its progress. I believe that this is a suitable time for women's participation in parliamentary life because it would be wrong to immobilize half of the society. We hope the government will, in the light of his highness the amir's speech, set a date for elections soon. [passage omitted]

Authorities Reportedly Execute More Egyptians

PM0904131291 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic
2 Apr 91 pp 1, 11

[Hani 'Amarah and Ashraf Badr report: "18 Egyptians Killed in Kuwait; Scores Brought To Trial"]

[Excerpts] The Kuwaiti authorities have executed seven Egyptians by firing squad on charges of acting as informers for the Iraqi authorities. That brings the total number of Egyptians executed in Kuwait to 18. AL-SHA'B has learned that there are 309 Egyptians in Kuwaiti prisons awaiting sentence on the same charge.

The al-Sabah government has also deported 19 Egyptians for cooperating with the Iraqis. The deportation infuriated the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, which handed Kuwaiti Ambassador in Cairo al-Kandari a strongly-worded letter also condemning the continuing execution of Egyptians and detention of a large number of them in Kuwaiti jails.

In another new development, Egyptian Workers Federation Chairman Ahmad al-'Amawi has admitted the al-Sabah government's excesses in its treatment of Egyptians after their return to Kuwait. He called for a stand that will protect Egyptians in Kuwait and preserve their dignity.

In a report that it issued this week, the Egyptian Human Rights Organization appealed to the Egyptian Government, the United Nations, and all human rights organizations to act firmly to end the suffering of the Egyptians and other Arab communities, especially the Palestinians, who are the target of terrifying attacks extending as far as murder and torture to the death, as well as persecution, prolonged detention, ill treatment, and collective punishment for alleged cooperation with Iraqi occupation forces.

It said that people facing such charges should be given a fair trial in accordance with international law. [passage omitted]

The organization also said in its report that a number of Egyptians were tortured to death, then buried in al-Riqqah graveyard, and that marks of torture could be clearly seen on their bodies with, in some cases, ears, noses, and lips cut off, in addition to burn marks. [passage omitted]

Government Denies Charge

PM0904132091 Cairo AL-ANBA' in Arabic
5 Apr 91 p 3

[Unattributed report: "Our Embassy Denies AL-SHA'B's Allegations About Execution of Egyptians"—formerly Kuwait AL-ANBA']

[Excerpt] Our embassy in Cairo yesterday denied allegations by the Egyptian opposition newspaper AL-SHA'B that a number of Egyptians in Kuwait have been executed and others mistreated. The embassy cited the press conference held by Interior Minister Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, statements by Egyptian Ambassador in Kuwait Amin Nammar, and the Middle East Watch organization's report. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

'Source' Denies Considering Recognition of Israel

LD0904224791 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2221 GMT
9 Apr 91

[Text] Riyadh 9 April (SPA)—A responsible source has made the following statement to SPA:

Some Western news agencies, citing Israeli radio, today reported a news item which claimed that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was considering the announcement of its recognition of Israel and that Foreign Minister His Royal Highness Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal will arrive in Cairo today to hold talks with President Muhammad Husni Mubarak on that issue. The source said: Everything that was reported in that news item was essentially fabricated in sentence and detail, and there is absolutely no truth in it.

Saddam Discusses Developments With RCC Members

NC1004050791 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 0300 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn chaired a Revolution Command Council [RCC] meeting in which the latest political developments were discussed. The meeting was attended by comrades Sa'di Mahdi Salih and Latif Nusayyif Jasim, members of the Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn; and Culture and Information Minister Hamid Yusuf Hammadi.

Saddam Receives Message From Yemeni President

NC0904192691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1842 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Apr (INA)—President Saddam Husayn received Yemeni Housing and Planning Minister Muhammad Ahmad Sulayman this evening. The Yemeni minister conveyed to the president an oral mesage from his brother, Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih.

Discussions during the meeting dealt with the current Arab situation and the fraternal relations between the two countries.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz, Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn, and the Yemeni ambassador in Baghdad.

Foreign Minister Receives Note From Cuban Minister

NC0804164891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1450 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 8 Apr (INA)—Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn has received a message from his Cuban counterpart, Isidoro Malmierca. In the message, the Cuban minister expressed the thanks of the people and Government of Cuba for Iraq's support of Cuba's just stand at the Human Rights Committee against the U.S. lies which are aimed at treating Cuba in an arbitrary and discriminatory manner.

The message reads: The report submitted by UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar on the outcome of the contacts with our government in accordance with resolution 113/1989 is characterized by a sense of reality and objectivity. Although the report treats Cuba as an equal with the other world organization members, this report was disregarded by the United States which made strenuous political efforts within the committee to condemn Cuba and keep pressures on our country.

The U.S. recommendations were primarily aimed at imposing various kinds of pressures and extortion to attain its objectives. This shameful course was resisted only by those who enjoy dignity, honor, and independent decisionmaking within the framework of the unipolar new international order.

Therefore, your excellency, I would like to reiterate that your country's support and solidarity at these moments are highly appreciated by Cuba.

UN Delegate Continues Protests of U.S. Overflights

NC0904132191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1250 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] New York, 9 Apr (INA)—Iraq's permanent representative to the United Nations has submitted a memorandum to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar regarding flights by U.S. aircraft over Iraqi territory for the purpose of reconnaissance and harrassment. The memorandum contains the following information:

1. U.S.-Saudi air activity on 7-8 April 1991 totaled 88 sorties in 44 formations.

2. The aircraft, identified as F-15's and F-14's, flew at an altitude of between two and nine km and at a speed of between 720 and 850 km per hour.

3. The hostile aircraft flew over Baghdad and north and west of Baghdad in the central regions of Iraq at 160 km for the purpose of reconnaissance and harrassment.

The Iraqi representative asked that this document be circulated as a UN Security Council document.

Party Officials Continue Regional Visits

Al-Zubaydi Visits Dhi Qar

NC0904142291 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1030 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi has conveyed President Leader Saddam Husayn's greetings to the chieftains of the tribes in Dhi Qar Governorate.

At the meeting, which was attended by Dhi Qar Governor 'Aziz Salih al-Numan and the members of the command of the Dhi Qar Ba'th Party branch, the deputy prime minister said that the actions of the mob and the agents, who had infiltrated from across the borders to carry out the designs of their masters who are known for their hatred of Iraq and its national unity and of the achievements of the vanguard 17-30 July revolution, have been irrevocably wiped out.

He added that the sons of this governorate have always been known for their national stands in the face of imperialism and the enemies, as well as against these enemies' attempts to destroy Iraq's unity. He said that the president leader is proud of the sons of this governorate.

Deputy Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi called for mobilizing and intensifying efforts for the sake of rebuilding what was destroyed by the American, Zionist, and Atlantic bombardment and by the

agents. He referred to the efforts that are being made to enhance the level of services that are provided to the citizens in this governorate.

The INA correspondent in the Dhi Qar Governorate said that the topics discussed during the meeting dealt with expediting work in the services' projects on which the citizens directly depend.

Al-Majid Visits Al-Ta'mim

NC0804203491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1920 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] Karkuk, 8 Apr (INA)—'Ali Hasan al-Majid, Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command member, has stressed that Iraq and its heroic people are now stronger than ever. They will even be stronger in the future when the acts of sabotage, sedition, and riots are wiped out, al-Majid added.

The regional command member chaired two meetings held at the secretariat of the al-Ta'mim Governorate and at the party's al-Ta'mim branch. He said that the recent events that took place in our struggling country and which constitute a link in the chain of conspiracies have strengthened the unity of the people and made them rally behind leader struggler Saddam Husayn to crush the conspirators and traitors.

The meetings were attended by the under secretary of the Interior Ministry, al-Ta'mim Governor Hashim Hasan al-Majid, the secretary and members of the al-Ta'mim party's branch, and a number of directors of the governorate departments. The regional command members pointed to the issue of services, stressing that priority should be given to the issue of connecting drinking water to all residential areas in Karkuk. He urged those present to end the state of anxiety, reopen all markets, shops, hotels, and restuarants, and to restore normal life to the town.

Foreign Ministry Official Praises Arab League

NC1004083391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0805 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Apr (INA)—Ambassador Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, head of the Foreign Ministry's Arab Department, has described the meetings of the 95th session of the Arab League Council as positive.

Hammudi, who chaired the Iraqi delegation to the session, said that the meetings proved that the Arab League is the best formula for dialogue among the Arabs and for addressing pan-Arab and bilateral issues without foreign intervention.

In an interview with ALIF BA' magazine, published today, Hammudi noted that the Arab League Charter and the Joint Arab Defense Pact are a good framework for consolidating the march of joint action and safeguarding pan-Arab security.

He added that Iraq will continue to participate effectively in all of the Arab League meetings because the current phase in the Arab nation is marked by very delicate and grave challenges. These require Arabs to circumvent disagreement, friction, paralysis, and polarization and to work within the framework of the Arab League in its capacity as the pan-Arab establishment qualified to steer the affairs of the Arab family.

Hammudi said that Iraq's participation in the meetings was an opportunity to hold contacts with the Arab delegations and to assure them about the cohesion of Iraq's internal situation and the Iraqi people's support for President Saddam Husayn.

The 95th session of the Arab League was held in Cairo on 30 March 1991.

Housing Minister Outlines Reconstruction Plan

NC1004105791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0940 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Apr (INA)—Engineer Mahmud Dhiyab al-Ahmad, minister of housing and reconstruction, has said that priority in the plan for repairing the destruction caused by the war will be given to facilities providing services to citizens.

In a statement to the weekly ALIF BA' magazine published here today, the minister said reconstruction of schools, hospitals, oil refineries, electricity generators, roads, and bridges will be at the top of the list.

He said the ministry's engineers and technicians, using available resources, have started to repair the concrete bridges in Baghdad, al-Basrah, Maysan, and Wasit Governorates and in a number of subdistricts and other areas.

Many good people around the world are willing to participate in the rebuilding of Iraq because a number of foreign companies helped execute many services projects in the country in the past, the minister said. [sentence as received]

He said that the current economic blockade on Iraq may delay this participation, but things may be good after the blockade is lifted.

The minister praised brothers in Jordan for their pan-Arab positions on the reconstruction of Iraq. He said: The Jordanian brothers adopted yet another honorable position; they gave their ideas on the reconstruction process and proposed that a bridge on a motorway be repaired; they will start their work soon.

On the projects that were to be executed before the aggression on Iraq, the minister said: All those projects were suspended; we will reconsider them according to their priorities after completing the reconstruction plan.

Reportage on Food Shortage, Distribution

Imports Worth $118 Million

NC1004110591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1020 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Apr (INA)—Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih has said that his ministry has prepared contracts for importing foodstuff worth $118 million.

In press statements published here today, he said that the first shipment of foodstuff will arrive in Iraq to ensure the citizens' needs and increase their rations in light of the country's resources and in a way that would ensure every person with the food he requires.

On the possibility of opening outlets for importing foodstuff and other citizens' needs on the basis of the Security Council resolution that lifts the economic embargo on Iraq, the minister said: We do not regard the Security Council as one that will solve all the problems in providing the people with food. The resolution allows us to buy food but at the same time ties up our oil exports, the only commodity that pays for imports from abroad.

'Intensive' Distribution Campaign

NC1004074891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0710 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 10 Apr [INA]—Minister of Trade Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih has stated that an intensive campaign is under way to supply food to the northern region. In a statement published in AL- JUMHURIYAH today, the minister said that the ministry has allocated large quantities of foodstuffs for distribution to people who have returned to their residences in the northern towns, villages, and hamlets.

The trade minister said that trucks filled with foodstuffs are leaving continuously for the northern region. Thirty-five trucks left the day before yesterday.

He mentioned that 100,000 loaves of bread, plus baby milk at the rate of one tin for each child, have been distributed daily to the returnees in the northern region during the past four days. The ministry has also allocated tons of food for daily distribution to the returnees in the northern towns, villages, and hamlets.

The minister stressed that the ministry has enough surplus food for all the returnees. It will deliver the food to the families at their houses in al-Sulaymaniyah, Irbil, and Dahuk.

'All Necessary Measures' Taken

NC0904202191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1920 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Apr (INA)—Dr. Ibrahim al-Nuri, chairman of the Iraqi Red Crescent Society, has emphasized that the society has taken all the necesary measures to send medical and food supplies to the sons of our people in northern Iraq.

In a statement to INA, al-Nuri said that the distribution of these supplies to all the sons of our Kurdish people in the northern area began as soon as the bands of agentry and sabotage were crushed. He added that specialized medical teams have been sent to offer their services within the health institutions in the northern area, which have been sabotaged and plundered by the agent bands.

Meanhile, a Health Ministry official has stated that as soon as the plotters against the unity of the people and the homeland were crushed the ministry sent convoys of ambulances, trucks loaded with medical supplies, and specialized medical teams to the area.

The official asserted that the ministry took the necessary steps to ensure the revival of the health institutions. He also said that all the medical and health instiutions have resumed their activities to provide services to the sons of the Kurdish people now that these institutions have been furnished with all their requisites of medical equipment, medicines, and medical and health staff.

Refugees Assert Clashes Continue in South

LD1004101891 Tehran IRNA in English 0922 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Ahvaz, Khuzestan Prov., April 10, IRNA—Clashes between the Iraqi popular forces and the presidential guards in southern Iraqi cities still continue, refugees arriving in Iran through southern borders told IRNA Wednesday.

They said that the fightings are more intense in Maysan, Dhi Qar and al-Basrah.

The refugees added that at least ten Iraqis in southern cities are executed by pro-Saddam forces every day many of whom are residents of Hay-al-Husayn township in al-Basrah who attack the headquarters of the presidential guards during the night. Scores of others have also been arrested.

A refugee from southern Iraq, Hisam 'Abd-al-Majid, said that the government forces have no mercy on those who intend to take refuge in Iran and kill them ruthlessly.

Rebels Launch 'Successful' Attack Near Al-Basrah

NC1004085191 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 0645 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] An urgent report from the al-Tannumah area in al-Basrah says that our heroic fighters successfully

attacked the headquarters of the [number indistinct] division [words indistinct]. Our fighters seized a large number of weapons [words indistinct].

Reports Detail Continued Fighting

LD0704113791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 7 Apr 91

[Text] Disturbances in southern Iraqi towns continued yesterday and last night. According to IRNA from Ahvaz, the sound of the explosion of heavy shells, which are being used against the people by Republican Guards, could be heard in Khorramshahr. Furthermore, Iraqi refugees arriving in Iran say that disturbances are continuing in al-Basrah and al-Tunnamah. According to the report, one of the residents of Karbala', who has taken refuge in Iran, has also described the crimes of the Ba'thist regime in the attack on Karbala'. He said that over 2,000 houses were destroyed by the Republican Guard attack on the town.

Another report from the Central News Unit states: In the course of an infiltration operation in the Iraqi town of al-Sulaymaniyah, Iraqi opposition forces destroyed two helicopters and two tanks belonging to the Iraqi Army. According to the report, opposition forces announced that the wreckage of one of the helicopters fell on a hotel, damaging it.

In the meantime, one of the Kurdish Iraqi refugees who has witnessed from close-up the clashes between Iraqi opposition forces and the Iraqi regime's forces said that because some Iraqi troops have joined the popular forces in the south and north of the country, Saddam is using non-Iraqis to suppress the uprising of the Iraqi people. He added: Although the Ba'thist forces are in control in most Iraqi towns, nonetheless, harrassment and guerrilla operations by opposition forces are continuing in strength, and severe blows have so far been inflicted on the Ba'thists.

Refugees Confirm Continuing Battles in South

LD0504132791 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 5 Apr 91

[Text] Unrest continues in southern Iraqi cities, especially Abu-al-Khasib in the al-Basrah Governorate. According to IRNA, several citizens from southern Iraq, who sought refuge in Iran today, confirmed the continuation of battle between the people and government forces in al-Basrah and al-Zubayr.

According to those refugees, the Iraqi regime, by dispatching a large number of troops equipped with all types of weaponry and military gear, has slaughtered a great number of people. The refugees, referring to the destruction of many villages in southern Iraq said: In the course of the firing a great number of villagers have been killed or wounded. According to the refugees, in al-Basrah, al-Tannumah, Abu-al-Khasib, al'Amarah, and al-Nasiriyah, a great number of the people, especially children and the elderly, have died because of the shortage of medicine, dried milk, and foodstuffs.

Opposition Claims of Captures, Deaths Reported

Regime General, Officers Captured

LD0804121491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] According to an IRNA report, an Iraqi general and five officers under his command were captured by the popular forces in al-Tannumah yesterday. Some of the Iraqi refuges who entered Iran via the southern borders last night, having announced this piece of news, said: Scattered clashes continue in the towns of al-Basrah, al-Tannumah, and Abu al-Khasib between the popular and the Republican Guard headquarters yesterday, killing a number of them.

Remarking on the stationing of Republican Guard units on al-Basrah-al-Zubayr, al-Basrah-al-Safwan, and al-Basrah-al-Amarah roads, the refugees said: In stationing themselves on those roads, the Republican Guards prevent the people from leaving the southern towns and heading toward the Iranian borders.

One of the refugees, Muhammad Mansur, said: the Ba'thist forces in the towns of al-Basrah and al-Tannumah not only massacre the people, but also (?mutilate) them. Remarking on the scattered corpses in the southern towns of Iraq, the refugee added: Even though a number of these corpses have been left unattended in the town streets and by roadsides, the Iraqi forces do not permit people to collect and bury them, hence the spread of various diseases.

Five 'High-Ranking' Officers Captured

LD0904075891 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0230 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Radio Revolutionary Iraq [Voice of Rebellious Iraq] has announced: In the course of an attack on the base of the Iraqi Army's III Corps, opponents of the Iraqi regime captured five high-ranking officers including a staff brigadier general and a colonel. According to the radio the opposition forces, laying in ambush on the al-Basrah-al-'Amarah road, also attacked a jeep of the Iraqi Army's command and killed a high-ranking officer of Saddam's regime and a number of the forces accompanying him.

Al-'Amarah Army Headquarters Captured

LD0604132391 Tehran IRNA in English 1127 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 6, IRNA—Headquarters of the Fourth Iraqi Army near al-'Amarah, in Southern Iraq, was completely taken over by the opposition forces Friday, said Iraqi refugees arriving here.

According to the refugees heavy clashes continue between the government and popular forces in the

southern cities of al-'Amarah, al-Kut, Abu-Khasbah, al-Harase, al-Nasariyah, 'Ali al-Gharbi, 'Ali al-Sharqi, al-Diwaniyah, Kohla [as received], Qala Saleh, Qora To, Meimoona [as received] and al-Mashro despite deployment of helicopters and napalm bombs by military and severe suppression of people.

An Iraqi refugee who arrived here Saturday through Dehloran border checkpoint said that 37 people, members of five families were set afire in public in a street in the city of al-Kut.

The refugees said that the Iraqi Army has been deploying small military airplanes to crush the people.

They appealed to international organizations to make Saddam Husayn stop slaughtering the Iraqi people.

Thirty Government Troops Killed

NC0604170591 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1425 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Text] As part of the valiant campaign mounted by our revolutionary units in most of Iraq's cities in uprising and to promote the drive to strip the regime of its manpower and arms in the interest of liberating the sons of our Armed Forces from the dominance, captivity, and slavery of the regime, our heroic revolutionaries in the city of al-'Amarah attacked a major Special Forces position at night. Our forces advanced toward their target following a brief clash with the enemy. Various weapons were used. The enemy forces retreated ignominuously, leaving behind 30 killed and many wounded. They had burned their vehicles before retreating.

We salute our heroic revolutionaries as they chronicle the most remarkable epics in the cause of dignity.

Rebel Acivities, Regime's Response Discussed

NC0804185391 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1730 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, 8 Apr (SANA)—The popular revolution in Iraq has proceeded with its uprising against the Iraqi regime, challenging the genocidal war launched by this regime against the sons of the people.

In a press release here today, a spokesman for the Iraqi al-Da'wah Islamic Party said that the forces of the Iraqi popular revolution have launched several attacks on the forces of the ruling regime in al-'Amarah and Majnun Islands in southern Iraq, inflicting heavy casualties in human lives and military hardware, and capturing large numbers of personnel.

The spokesman added that the Iraqi regime authorities have recently begun deliberately to (?evacuate) the center of Karbala' and holy al-Najaf, started demolishing and destroying houses in them, and demolishing houses of those who participate in the uprising in other Iraqi areas.

The spokesman also asserted that the regime forces are shelling cities at random, attacking Iraqi refugees by helicopter, and carrying out large-scale house-to-house searches and mass execution of women and children.

Radio Urges Army To Topple Saddam

LD0804100191 (Clandestine) Voice of Free Iraq in Arabic 1200 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Text] Sons of our Iraqi people; valiant sons of our army; officers and men wherever you may be, in all sectors, support your people's upsurge [intifadah]. Support your people's will to topple Saddam. Iraq can have no life except through the might of the army and the people. Iraq can never rise again except through the uprising of the people and the army.

Officers, commanders of the army in all sectors, honor your pledge to the people. Close your ranks within a unified command that will topple Saddam and his regime.

The people look to your role in unifying Iraq. The people look to your command in securing victory and settling the situation in favor of the people. For without the army, the unarmed people cannot face up to tyranny.

Free men of the army, O dutiful sons who pledged loyalty to the people and promised them victory, this is your day and this is your glory. Rush to the support of the people and put an end to the tyrant's massacre. Spare the blood of your people through an army uprising that will topple Saddam.

Officers in all brigades and regiments; retired officers; deported and detained officers; sons of the army and the Armed Forces in all sectors, without you there can be no decisive victory over the tyrant. Close your ranks, unify your command, and decide on toppling the tyrant. There can be no salvation for Iraq except with the fall of the reign of tyranny.

O blessed sons of Iraq, the people are calling you. You are (?behind) them. This is your day and this is your glory. Victory shall be for the people of Iraq and for the Army of Iraq.

Kurdistan's Legislative Council To Meet 13 Apr

NC1004111491 Baghdad Domestic Service in Arabic 1048 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen, here is an announcement: The autonomous region's Legislative Council holds the first session of its 1991 spring term at 1000 on Saturday 13 April 1991. Members of the council are kindly requested to attend on that date in the Governorate of Irbil.

[Signed] [Name indistinct], speaker of the Legislative Council.

Iraqi Refugees Detail 'Harrowing' Suffering

LD0904182991 Tehran IRNA in English 1527 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Bakhtaran, April 9, IRNA—Victims of American deceit and Ba'thist tyranny, Iraqi refugees trekking to Iran on foot are badly in need of food, and many are starving to the point of total exhaustion and death. They tell harrowing tales, as the world watches in stony silence to the 20th century's worst human catastrophe.

The fresh arrivals fleeing Saddam Husayn's reign of terror, Tuesday urged "immediate help" from international organizations to save the lives of those now waiting in appalling conditions at the Iran-Iraq borders.

According to the refugees most of the Iraqis trekking to Iran usually rely on half-soiled stale bread and the seeds or stalks of certain wild plants growing here and there, as their only means of nutrition in the course of their arduous travel to a safe haven.

Many of them are reportedly suffering from infectious diseases due to unhygienic conditions.

So far over 800,000 Iraqis have crossed into Iran, and the number is expected to cross the 1.5 million mark, in view of the unabated slaughters in Ba'thist Iraq, both in the north and south.

They disclosed that in the northeastern Iraqi towns of Khanaqin and Klar, forces of the Iranian outlaw grouplet, 'Monafeqin' (hypocrites) Khalq Organization (MKO), are collaborating with the Ba'thist troops to crush the Iraqi Muslims and push them on to the Iranian border.

"The (MKO) terrorists killed the entirety of my family in a room and later on they leveled our house with tank-fire, exulting in wild cries," wailed Fatah Fathollah today.

The Iraqi refugees spoke of "torture, rape and blood-curdling slaughters."

Shaker Toutil, of Darbandikhan (Karkuk Governorate) said a group of MKO outlaws garbed in the local costumes of Kurds raided the town earlier this week throwing hand grenades towards the local Kurds and pushing them out of their homes.

Another refugee said a group of Iraqis fleeing Saddam's repression were gathering at the banks of the Sirawan Stream, in Sulaymaniyah Governorate earlier this week, "when a convoy of Iraqi helicopters suddenly appeared overhead dropping large sacks into the water which blasted seconds after they fell, polluting the only source of water supply for the exhausted refugees."

He said many sufferred from acute dysentery resulting from drinking the polluted river water.

Other Iraqi refugees related more ghastly scenes of their suicidal trek for safety across highlands and vast lonely deserts on the other side of the border.

Sardar Mahmoud Hameh-Morad, a technology student from Al-Najaf was carrying a newborn baby and feeding it with water from a bottle rather than milk as he arrived this side of the border in Tilaku of Sar-pole-ezahab [name spelling as received] in Iran.

"Yesterday, Iraqi helicopters strafed groups of civilians in Darbandikhan, and minutes after the bombing I found this baby in the arms of its dead mother," he said.

He said he did not personally know the parents of the baby, and delivered the anonymous survivor of the Iraqi air raid to relief workers on the Iranian side of the border.

Shukur Abdul-Hussein from Kifri said "I was hiding with nine other family members in a pit near chemically-scarred Halabjah, yesterday, when Iraqi Army helicopters dropped bombs which killed all my family while I miraculously escaped death."

Octogenerian Raouf Faraj Qazi from Klar beat his chest and said his relatives had been burned to death in their home as Iraqi Army helicopters dropped bombs on their house Monday.

Majid Saleh, a fine arts college student from Khanaqin said he had witnessed the killing of civilians in Klar "by non-Iraqi soldiers who seemed to be nationals of certain Arab countries. On Monday a group of them flung two Kurds on a heap of burning fire and strafed them with Kalashnikov bullets."

In another spot in Klar, he said, Iraqi soldiers flung Rabiah Ahmed Emdad, a small Iraqi girl into blazing fire and burned her alive. She was the daughter of a Kurdish peshmerga.

Meanwhile, Iranian border guards in Saveji near Marivan, northwest of Sanandaj last night lodged 2,500 Iraqi refugees in Marivan. Among them were many sick children and aged men and women who were taken to a city hospital.

The inflow of Iraqi refugees to Iran through the Saveji border continued non-stop through Tuesday. Reports said at least 500 of them died of cold weather and starvation behind the Iranian border there.

The majority of Iraqi Kurds had to suffer heavy squalls of sleet and rain overnight monday in cold weather. With inadequate clothing, and having to do with dirty running water on earth for quenching their thirst, infectious diseases are rapidly spreading among the refugees.

Many also stumble on concealed mines and die on the spot or lose a limb and suffer other injuries. In trekking towards the Iranian border Sunday a group of 20 Iraqi

refugees mainly children, died of extreme fatigue and starvation on the Iraqi side of the border outpost Shaykh Salih.

Larger groups of Iraqi Kurds are reportedly walking towards the Shayh Salih border post in Iran hoping to safely traverse a 70 to 80-km distance on foot from Darbandikhan towards the Iranian border under adverse weather and hopeless conditions, and with Ba'thist forces in pursuit.

Those lucky to enter Iran today said that if the Islamic Republic denied them entry "the fate of the Kurds would be sealed forever in Iraq."

Iranian Captive on Transporting Sabotage Group

NC0904195191 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1850 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Apr (INA)—Baghdad television tonight aired an interview with an Iranian who entered Iraq with a group to jeopardize the security and stability of Iraq and its noble people.

The Iranian captive, named (Husayn Nawruzi), lives in Asadabad, admitted that he is a driver and that he was ordered by (Isma'il Bayyat), an official in the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, to transport a group of 38 armed Iranian saboteurs.

The Iranian captive emphasized that the group carried various types of weapons—hand grenades, mortars, RPG-7's, and Klashnikovs—with which to carry out acts of sabotage, murder, and robbery in Iraqi cities.

He said: My task was to transport the armed group from the Iranian city of (Bakhtaran) to the area of al-Tannumah in Iraq and then to the city of al-'Amarah via (al-Bsaytin). A member of the group who knew the way was supervising the journey.

He added that when the group entered the city of al-'Amarah, it began to attack and kill innocent civilian and military citizens and to loot and burn commercial stores and the state's departments.

He said that soon after the group entered the city of al-'Amarah, the city was surrounded by Iraqi Armed Forces. He said that most of the group was killed and the rest fled.

The Iranian captive said in his television interview that he is in good health and that the Iraqis have treated him very well.

Opposition Leader Praises Resolution 688

LD0804202991 Tehran IRNA in English 1716 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 8, IRNA—The head of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution of Iraq (SAIRI) has termed the passage of Resolution 688 by the Security Council condemning Iraq's suppression of its people as one of the "fruits of the popular uprising in that country."

Resolution 688, approved on Friday, terms Saddam Husayn's suppression of the Iraqi people a "threat to world peace and security", and calls on the Ba'thist leaders to immediately end their repressive moves.

SAIRI head, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Muhammad Baqir Hakim, also underlined the need for all Iraqi opposition groups and people to close ranks in order to attain the "sacred goals" of the popular uprising.

Hakim was addressing a ceremony marking the 11th martyrdom anniversary of prominent alim Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Baqir Sadr who along with his equally illustrious sister, Bint al-Hoda, was brutally murdered by Saddam Husayn for standing up for the democratic aspirations of the oppressed Iraqi people.

Hoj. Hakim appealed to Iraqi exiles to continue their aid to their oppressed brethren inside Iraq. He also lauded the leader, government and people of the Islamic Republic for their hospitality towards the hundreds of thousands of Iraqis taking refuge in Iran to escape the general massacre ordered by Saddam.

AL-THAWRAH Criticizes Resolution 688

NC0904092391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Apr (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH has denounced UN Security Council Resolution No. 688, considering it a flagrant intervention in Iraq's internal affairs and an unprecedented violation of the UN Charter.

In an article today, the newspaper says that the UN Security Council has never before issued a resolution interfering in any country's internal affairs. The council did not bother to listen to Iraq's point of view and deliberately and with premeditation ignored the most basic rights of a UN member state.

The newspaper adds that the issue of the agent rebellion in Iraqi Kurdistan would not have been discussed by the UN Security Council had it not represented the third phase of the planned aggression and imperialist-Zionist conspiracy against Iraq.

Discussing the motives for submitting the issue of the rebellion in north Iraq to the Security Council, AL-THAWRAH says: When Iraq put down this rebellion and rooted out treason and sabotage, the U.S.-Atlantic-Zionist-reactionary alliance was dumbfounded. Having bet on these misled and treasonous bands, the alliance had nothing left but to raise this issue at the Security Council.

The newspaper describes Turkey and Iran's allegations about their concern for and sympathy with the Kurds as an exposed political hypocrisy deceiving no one. Elaborating on this view, the newspaper says that these states'

stands on Kurdish national rights in their own countries and their racist and repressive policy are known worldwide. Turkey and Iran's stands on the March Manifesto and the autonomy experiment in Iraqi Kurdistan are also known.

AL'IRAQ Questions Actions of Opposition

NC0904113391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0950 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Baghdad, 9 Apr (INA)—The newspaper AL-'IRAQ has described the murder and sabotage carried out by a group of hooligans as a chapter in a serial of cowardly conspiracy, the strings of which are linked to the imperialist-Zionist aggression.

In an article headlined "The Opposition: Is It Destruction or Construction," the newspaper says: Those who perpetrated this tragic and dark chapter are a group of thieves, murderers, and rabid hooligans who were unleashed against this homeland to commit rape, desecrate holy places, destroy civilization, and kill people. That is why the people have rejected them and have also denounced and crushed them.

AL-'IRAQ adds: What happened in Iraq is not opposition, unless we consider it "opposition" against the entire people. This group of murderers has tried to dismember the homeland and to obliterate a whole people, targeting their revolutionary regime. Anyone targeting the people and homeland does not belong to the people and homeland. That is why the people have crushed these murderers, bared their evil aims, and let the world see pictures of their lowly deeds.

The newspaper says: The acts of sabotage that have taken place in various Iraqi towns will remain a mark of shame for all the suspect fronts and those behind them. The group of hooligans and murderers has committed lowly deeds which are a disgrace to mankind. Human conscience is disgusted with the ugliness and lowliness of these deeds and with the treachery and meanness of their perpetrators, who have worked against the people and homeland.

The newspaper asks: Does the people's and homeland's interest lie in murdering children in front of their families, raping young girls, violating the honor of women, lynching innocent civilians, throwing sick people out of the windows of hospitals, executing citizens without trial, looting houses, stealing the people's food and the citizens' money, and haphazardly opening fire on citizens?

The newspaper calls on human conscience, the civilized world, and the opposition factions and forces in the world, regardless of their affiliations and objectives, to contemplate these pictures and to ask these questions: Are these the aims of opposition? Can anyone support these criminals who have tried to assassinate life and obliterate a whole people?

Reportage on Secretary of State Baker Visit

Arens 'Cautious' on Breakthrough

TA0904164791 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1605 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Interview with Defense Minister Moshe Arens by political correspondent Arye Golan "at the end of the meeting with Secretary of State Baker, a short time ago"—recorded]

[Text] [Golan] Mr. Defense Minister, after a day of talks with Baker in Jerusalem, do you sense that we are closer now to the summoning of a regional conference that will constitute the opening of direct negotiations? Are we closer to a breakthrough in the political process?

[Arens] I prefer to be cautious, and not to answer your question in the affirmative. What is clear is that Secretary of State Baker and President Bush are willing and want to make a great effort to promote the peace process. Of course, we welcome it and wish both us and them success.

[Golan] Would you describe the U.S. renunciation of its demand to include a Palestinian resident of East Jerusalem and a Palestinian exile in the delegation as part of the U.S. effort? Are we closer to an agreement, or have we reached an agreement with the United States regarding the composition of the Palestinian delegation?

[Arens] I am not aware of any agreement whatsoever concerning the composition of the delegation, but I have the feeling that the U.S. Administration understands our misgivings about including inhabitants of East Jerusalem, who are actually Israeli inhabitants, in any delegation whatsoever.

[Golan] And what about Palestinian exiles?

[Arens] I think that on this subject, too, they understand that we have no intention of negotiating with any exiled representatives whatsoever. We should reach an agreement and understanding with the Arab population of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza District.

[Golan] Mr. Defense Minister, you do not sound particularly optimistic after your meeting with the secretary of state. Am I right?

[Arens] I did not know that you were psychic. I simply think that I am realistic. I know that the peace process in the Middle East is tiresome and arduous. We have been dealing with it for 42 and ½ years. Therefore, I think expectations should not be raised excessively and that the efforts should be pursued. We are definitely grateful to the U.S. Administration for its willingness to devote itself to the process at this time.

[Golan] Minister Arens, thank you very much.

Adviser on Baker-Arens Talks

TA0904190491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1505 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Telephone interview with Dani Nave, the defense minister's media adviser, by Mikha Friedman—live]

[Text] [Friedman] We hear that Baker relayed to Arens messages from the Palestinian delegation with which he had met earlier. What sort of messages would he have relayed concerning the agreements he had reached earlier with Israel's top leadership?

[Nave] No messages of any kind from the secretary of state's meeting with the Palestinian delegation were discussed in the meeting with the defense minister. Secretary Baker and Minister Arens discussed the various steps that can be taken in various areas to promote the peace process in our region. I think that the U.S. Administration and the secretary of state are investing huge efforts to promote the peace process. Of course, we greatly appreciate those efforts.

[Friedman] Did Secretary Baker voice his appreciation of the Israeli decision to release some 1,000 Palestinian prisoners who took part in the intifadah?

[Nave] In the meeting with the secretary of state, the defense minister spoke about the policy of the Israeli Government and the defense establishment in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip; about the various steps we have been taking vis-a-vis the Palestinian population in those areas. The defense minister emphasized that these were not gestures, but a policy, a series of steps that we think should be taken in Israel's interests. The U.S. secretary of state expressed his appreciation of the various steps we have been taking, including the one you mentioned.

[Friedman] The last question refers to the settlement drive, the beefing up of settlements and the construction of more houses in the territories, particularly in Judaea and Samaria. Did Secretary Baker show any interest in the various reports about the expansion of settlements, which contradicts Israeli Government decisions?

[Nave] All I can tell you is that a meeting between the secretary of state and the defense minister is not the most appropriate forum to discuss that question. At this point, I can certainly not elaborate on this issue.

Levi on 'Two-Track' Approach

TA0904200491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1830 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by political correspondent 'Imanu'el Halperin—live]

[Text] [Halperin] Mr. Levi, good evening.

[Levi] Good evening.

[Halperin] You stated this morning, with evident pleasure, that there is agreement with the Americans about the continuation of the process. Were you talking about a joint Israeli-U.S. approach to be presented to the Arab side?

[Levi] Obviously, before we advance, we must lay the foundation of the path we will tread, which is understanding with the United States, or else we will find ourselves facing the entire world. If that were to be the case, it would be much better not to tread that path at all. Therefore, I would say that understanding with the United States is very important, and I am very glad that we made good progress today and removed many obstacles which caused me to be categorically opposed to this initiative in the past. Today we agreed to tread the two-track path that I had once proposed. I am glad that this approach is now accepted by all, but it must still be strengthened. According to it, the Arab countries will talk peace with us face to face on the one hand, while on the other hand, we will deal with the Palestinian question according to Israel's original peace initiative of May 1989.

[Halperin] Sir, my question was whether this approach will be presented as a package to the Arab countries, or will the Americans reach a different understanding with the Arab side?

[Levi] In order to make good progress—and the Americans realize this—an understanding had to be reached with Israel. Admittedly, there are still some outstanding questions, and we should not delude ourselves into thinking otherwise. When we come to the crunch, there will be more arguments, but that is the nature of negotiations. The issues at stake are not simple, but I call our mutual understanding a very important cornerstone, because no agreement will be made with the other side before we have given our consent. That principle is acceptable to the secretary of state.

[Halperin] So, we made our peace with the United States. The question is whether there is agreement within the Israeli troika—yourself, the prime minister, and Minister Arens. Do you all share a common approach?

[Levi] First of all, about making our peace with the United States, I must say that we have excellent relations despite the fact that we do not see eye to eye on some matters. One must remember that many land mines existed in the past that impeded Israel from advancing toward peace; but we are now removing them, and this is very nice progress. Is it conceivable that I would reach any agreements whatsoever with the secretary of state without the approval of the prime minister? The three of us held talks and consultations on this very serious issue, not for the first time. On the eve of the secretary of state's visit, we met and unanimously decided on our parameters. Each one of us and all of us together are trying to promote these parameters in a favorable manner for Israel.

[Halperin] Let us talk about some of the questions that cropped up recently, such as the so-called opening, gathering, or meeting. Do we know who will attend it on the Arab side, when will it take place, and where?

[Levi] We will not determine who the participants will be; we want everybody to participate.

[Halperin] Syria?

[Levi] Syria? Yes, of course.

[Halperin] Are there are any signs that Syria may participate?

[Levi] The Americans think so, and we would like to hope that they will indeed succeed in bringing Syria around. The Americans tell us that the Arabs want to make progress, and that there is a different and new atmosphere whereby the entire region realizes that it must tread the path of peace.

[Halperin] Jordan, too?

[Levi] Jordan, too, of course.

[Halperin] Do the Americans think that Jordan may also participate?

[Levi] Yes, we definitely discussed the matter. On Thursday, the secretary of state will meet a senior Jordanian official. I can only hope that an agreement will be reached in this meeting so that progress is made in the direction of negotiations that would be preceded by a regional meeting.

[Halperin] When you say regional, do you mean this region? Will it take place here, or in Cairo, for example?

[Levi] When I say regional, I mean the countries of this region. For our part, we would like it to take place in Washington, but this is not a cardinal point at the moment.

[Halperin] Has a date been set? Is there any target date?

[Levi] The faster progress is made, the happier Israel will be. We are talking about this current year, and we would like to hope that the necessary coordination will be made. We have agreed that any understanding reached with us will not be violated and that no consent whatsoever will be given in contravention of Israel's position, but only in coordination with Israel and with its approval. That is very important.

[Halperin] Israel poses a condition, that the Soviet Union fully recognize the State of Israel. Have the Americans, or Israel directly, received a signal or information that that will occur on the eve of the conference?

[Levi] In light of the fact that we already have full consular relations, such an elementary demand unfortunately sounds like a condition. The Soviets themselves say that it is an anomaly to perpetuate this state of affairs; the Soviet foreign minister told me as much in

our meeting. At the same time, the Americans do not only think, but are also sure, that full diplomatic relations between Israel and the Soviet Union will definitely be established shortly.

[Halperin] Before or after the conference?

[Levi] Before.

[Halperin] Turning to the Palestinian delegation, does Israel want it to take part in the deliberations as part of the Jordanian delegation or separately?

[Levi] We also discussed that issue. We would like them to appear together; in other words, a Jordanian delegation that would include representatives from Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza who are not PLO members.

[Halperin] And who do not live in East Jerusalem?

[Levi] Our position on this matter is known, and we have stated it. It was one of the obstacles that impeded progress in the past. This obstacle will be removed; our position is clear. I would rather not go into detail at this point. Understanding has been attained on many principles, and it would not be fair for me to make any unequivocal statements or say that they agree to it before the secretary of state has discussed the matter with them. There is yet a great deal of work to be done, but Israel has proved, and will continue to prove, its wish for peace. I think this is a great step forward. I think the entire Israeli people shares this wish and yearning.

[Halperin] There could be conflicting views on that issue. An obstacle in the process could be the current rifts in the coalition and in the Likud, where new constraints may emerge that might sabotage the process.

[Levi] What do you mean by rifts? I do not see any rifts. First, the government has basic guidelines, and the peace process is the centerpiece of its actions and yearnings. Second, we act exactly according to the parameters spelled out in the government initiative of 1989. If somebody were to say they agreed to them because they thought they were unrealistic and unfeasible and that nobody would accept them, I would not think him a serious person. The Likud truly intends to promote the peace process as it perceives it. We are making many achievements which did not exist before. Nobody can say that the Likud's position is not to make progress toward peace. This is the cornerstone of our party platform; this is our ideology. Admittedly, we should not forsake parts of our ideology and banner. That is why we should not be deterred from taking action to attain peace on the one hand, and to firmly insist on those issues in which we believe on the other.

[Halperin] Are you not afraid that Sharon, Moledet, and Tehiya might bring about a government crisis?

[Levi] If peace is cause for a government crisis, I want to see the man who creates or triggers such a crisis. What hope would he be giving to the people? Is it to give hope to say no, even when our positions are being accepted? I do not think so. If somebody thinks that if we are more extreme—that is, if we talk about our positions without having any intention of making good on them, or if we make statements that will look like we were standing in the way of any progress; if anybody thinks that such actions would be good tidings, a political basis, or an ideology, then I think that anybody treading such a path has lost his way and has crossed the point beyond which there is only despair. We are resolved to make progress, insist on our positions, and bring good tidings and hope to our people.

[Halperin] Mr. Levi, thank you very much.

Pazner on Launching Negotiations

TA0904155691 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1400 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Interview with Avi Pazner, Prime Minister Shamir's media adviser, by Dan Shilon in the Jerusalem studio—live]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Shilon] Do you not share the optimism Foreign Minister Levi demonstrated after his meeting with Baker?

[Pazner] I wish to put all these conversations in their proper perspective. Perhaps you remember that before Baker arrived, everyone was practically hysterical, saying he is coming to pressure us, to threaten us, to cut aid. That did not happen. The conversations he held with the foreign minister and the prime minister today could definitely be described as good. I believe that in the future—as talks continue—if we go on at this pace, we will make progress, which is important for us all.

[Shilon] Perhaps not pressure, but the political salami method? Today he obtained Israel's agreement [not further specified], he will go to the Arab countries, and when he returns he will ask for another slice of the salami.

[Pazner] First, he has not yet obtained an agreement. As I said before, the talks will continue. You mistakenly called it a regional conference, but what was actually discussed was a meeting of the countries so as to launch direct negotiations, and this in no way deviates from our previous positions. This was agreed on as far back as 1987, when Shultz was here.

[Shilon] Is the difference between a meeting and a conference not mere semantics?

[Pazner] Not at all. There is a major difference: A conference is a working forum, that goes on working, making decisions, and so on; a meeting is a one-time short event, after which we immediately begin direct negotiations with each of the Arab countries. This idea still involves conditions and problems. We are in the process of refining it, and that process will go on. I hope it will go on in a positive and good manner, as did today's meetings. However, there is still a lot to be done.

[Shilon] Are we to expect a shuttle mission of Secretary Baker?

[Pazner] I do not know yet. There were rumors today in Baker's entourage; we did not hear that from him. It is possible that after his trip to the Arab countries, he would come back here. We heard nothing of the sort from him. He will meet the prime minister again, and perhaps we will be the wiser then.

[Shilon] One more issue. Lately there were rumors that the Saudis might take a step toward peace with us, perhaps even recognizing Israel. Do you know anything about this?

[Pazner] In the past few weeks, especially since the Gulf war ended, we have been receiving many reports indicating that the Saudis have begun looking at Israel differently. They have begun realizing things they did not understand before, mainly that Israel is not a threat to Saudi Arabia. There certainly are new tunes there. We still have to see just how practical this is.

[Shilon] Avi Pazner, prime minister's media adviser, thank you.

'Good Progress' in Talks With Shamir

TA1004105191 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1905 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Interview with Avi Pazner, Prime Minister Shamir's media adviser, by political correspondent Arye Golan "a short time ago" in Jerusalem—recorded]

[Text] [Pazner] The prime minister's talk with Baker was a serious and very friendly discussion in which Israel and the United States agreed, in a good spirit, to make a joint effort to try to make progress. All the issues discussed since the start of the visit were raised. We feel that good progress was made during this visit prior to the start of a process; but of course, we and the United States are not alone here, and we are now awaiting the responses of the other side.

[Golan] When you talk about good progress, do you also mean there is agreement and understanding between Israel and the United States on the implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338 on the achievement of a final settlement, a permanent solution?

[Pazner] I would not like to go into the details now about agreements and areas where there are no agreements yet. I would only like to say in general that we have the feeling that we touched on many subjects, and 242 is only one of many and varied issues that the prime minister discussed with Secretary Baker during this visit. We have a good feeling after these meetings. We have the feeling that in many fields, real understanding has been created between us and the United States, but as you say in English: You have to be two to tango. [preceding phrase in English] It is not sufficient for Israel and the United States to understand or agree with each other. The ball is now in the Arab court. Secretary Baker has gone there, and we must now wait and hear from him what will happen during his visit to the Arab states.

[Golan] At this stage, is an understanding between the two who are dancing a tango—the United States and Israel—stipulated in a written document? Did Baker present the prime minister with a written document?

[Pazner] I do not know about any written documents. Of course, the talks between the prime minister and Baker were written up in the protocols of the meetings yesterday and today, but there was no exchange of documents or any signing of documents.

[Golan] Will Baker be returning to Israel at the end of his talks in the Arab states, in other words, at the end of the week?

[Pazner] The secretary of state did not talk about such a possibility in his talks with the prime minister.

[Golan] Was there any agreement about where and when the regional meeting will take place?

[Pazner] No, we cannot say anything yet. Everything we have discussed is with the United States. We now need the agreement of the Arab states. In the meantime, we do not know what their positions are.

[Golan] You just talked with the prime minister immediately after he parted with Secretary Baker; did the prime minister seem optimistic about the future of the contacts, the chances to achieve peace?

[Pazner] I saw the prime minister in good spirits after his talks with Baker. They were long, and as I said before, detailed and deep talks, but also very friendly talks.

Levi on Talks, Mubarak Plan

TA1004115491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1130 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Report by 'Ido Baum "from Ben-Gurion Airport"—live]

[Text] The last and unscheduled meeting between Foreign Minister David Levi and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was held to exchange impressions and sum up the talks which were conducted during Baker's visit to Israel. Speaking at the end of this meeting, right on the runway before Baker took off, Foreign Minister Levi said he was optimistic about these talks.

[Begin recording] [Levi] If it were only up to one side, or even just up to Israel and the United States, I would tell you that I was satisfied to no end. But since things still have to be settled with other parties which have their own interests, we can only hope that Baker will indeed succeed in securing positive agreements with them. As

far as we are concerned, the understanding with the United States is very important and has turned out to be attainable.

[Baum] What do you think of Egyptian President Mubarak's plan published this morning?

[Levi] I suggest that we not comment on rumors and on things published in the media before the secretary of state gets there. It is a recognized part of the climate of negotiations that things generally start with announcements, disinformation, and so forth. We will comment only when Mubarak himself issues a statement after speaking with the secretary of state. [end recording]

As for Minister Ari'el Sharon's proposals, Foreign Minister Levi asserted that Sharon has come out with declarations, but that we are acting according to the government's decisions and basic guidelines. Sharon should not get in the way of our activity. [end recording]

Palestinians React to Baker Meeting

TA0904183391 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Excerpt of news conference held today by six Palestinian figures at East Jerusalem's al-Hakawati Theater following their meeting with Secretary of State James Baker—recorded]

[Text] [Yoni Ben-Menahem] What are the new U.S. proposals presented to you today by Baker that you did not hear in the previous meeting?

[Faysal al-Husayni] If we were to compare this meeting with the previous one, in which there was an effort to lay down the basic principles for any talks in the future, this time there was an effort to talk more about the details, including the U.S. proposal for a regional conference. As we understand, this is so far only an idea—or merely thinking aloud. Numerous possibilities were put forward to us. We took notes on this information and alternatives. We believe that through consultation with the PLO, a response might be given, or a more favorable picture could be drawn up, which protects the interests of the Palestinian people and grants them their right to self-determination.

[Ben-Menahem] There have been reports that the PLO has turned down the idea of a regional conference.

[Al-Husayni] As we understand, there are several concepts or forms of the regional conference. It is obvious that some of the forms will be immediately rejected, but there are other concepts that could be discussed and to which some modifications could be introduced. We are not obligated to accept all ideas that are proposed. We also can state what we believe and influence such decisions through the Palestinian body, represented by the PLO.

[Ben-Menahem] One last question: What is your position on the recent Israeli measures, such as the release of detainees and the exemption from taxes?

[Al-Husayni] I heard the question about the 1,000 detainees who might be released. What is the other one?

[Ben-Menahem] The exemption from taxes.

[Al-Husayni] If these measures are only a first step toward other measures that will bring about a situation in which we can begin talking about a political solution, this is a good thing; but the danger lies in the fact that Israel will imagine that these measures are by themselves a political solution.

[Jerusalem Israel Television Service in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 9 April carries recorded passage in English from the news conference held at the al-Hakawati Theater. Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, head of Gaza's Red Crescent, says: "I can't tell you about anything encouraging out of this meeting. We went to this meeting hoping to see that some practical moves will be taken to convince the Palestinian people that there is a serious movement towards peace. Anything short of such practical moves is not going to convince the Palestinian people that there is indeed a serious movement toward peace."

[Faysal al-Husayni adds: "You know that this group is not a negotiating group. It was a group of people who were chosen by the PLO to meet Mr. Baker. Those people, their mandate was to ask questions, to understand more, to put things in front of Mr. Baker, and not to come out with any sort of agreement."

[Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew at 1605 GMT on 9 April carries a report by Arye Gus on the meeting Secretary of State James Baker held with a Palestinian delegation. In a recorded passage, Dr. Zakariyya al-Agha, chairman of the Gaza Medical Association, states in English: "I personally think that there is no change in the American position up till now. They are insisting on the principle of not letting the PLO participate in the peace process. They are not willing to press on Israel. So, indeed, I didn't get more optimistic after this meeting. And, as I have said, there is very little things to tell my people about it."

[Gus goes on to say that "Bethlehem Mayor Ilyas Frayj, who, unlike his colleagues, came out encouraged from the meeting, threw down the gauntlet to Israel." In a recorded passage, Frayj says in English: "It all depends on what Israel is planning to do with the West Bank and Gaza. If they continue their creeping annexation by building or adding more new settlements in the occupied territories, who is going to believe that Israel wants peace?"]

Al-Husayni on Palestinian-Baker Talks

TA0904144191 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Excerpt] The contents of the talk U.S. Secretary of State James Baker held with six Palestinian figures will be relayed to the PLO leadership in Tunis, and a decision will be made there. Baker raised the notion of a regional

conference with his interlocutors. Faysal al-Husayni confirmed that the question of Palestinian representation had been discussed, but refused to elaborate. Our correspondent Udi Segal reports:

[Begin recording] [Segal] Secretary Baker conferred with the Palestinian delegation from the territories, which consisted of only six members, for over three hours at the U.S. Consulate in Jerusalem. The delegation presented its six-point position paper to Baker, stressing that the PLO is the representative of the Palestinians and that Israel is building settlements in the territories to establish a fait accompli. Faysal al-Husayni emphasized that Baker had not promised to take action to stop the settlement drive.

The secretary of state raised the notion of a regional conference. He discussed various possibilities concerning the Palestinian representation in such a conference.

[Al-Husayni] As far as we are concerned, we see that Europe has a more balanced position toward the conflict. That is why we favor an international conference to a regional one. We asked for more details on the issue. I think the PLO will study the matter and decide, and then I will tell you about it. [passage omitted] [end recording]

E. Jerusalem Representation Urged

TA1004115691 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 10 Apr 91 p 2

[Report by Roni Shaqed]

[Excerpt] "There is no chance of attaining any agreement whatsoever if the PLO is not included," the six members of the Palestinian delegation told U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in their meeting yesterday.

The notion of a regional conference featured prominently in the meeting, at the end of which the Palestinian delegates said: "We did not learn about any new U.S. position concerning the solution of the conflict."

The six-member delegation headed by Faysal al-Husayni also rejected the idea that the Palestinian delegation to the regional conference should not include inhabitants of East Jerusalem or exiled Palestinians.

Speaking to our correspondent yesterday, al-Husayni scoffed at the proposal. "I have not heard about such a proposal or talk. We will not agree to a delegation that does not include representatives of East Jerusalem. Israel must understand that any attempt to form a Palestinian delegation that does not include a representative from Jerusalem and that any attempt to ignore East Jerusalem—which is an inseparable part of the occupied territories—from the outset spells failure for any plan or attempt to settle the crisis.

"Such an Israeli request is a precondition designed to perpetuate the annexation of East Jerusalem to Israel, which is illegal," al- Husayni added.

Figures in the Nabulus area last night also said that they have not heard that talks are under way about a delegation in which inhabitants of East Jerusalem would not be represented. Sa'id Kan'an said: "There can be no delegation without a representative from East Jerusalem, which was part of the West Bank occupied in 1967 and is part of the state of Palestine. I am sure that it is within the ability of the United States to persuade Israel to accept a delegation that includes a representative from Jerusalem. One must also bear in mind that the United States does not recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital." [passage omitted]

Arab Officials Welcome Baker Efforts

TA1004100691 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 10 Apr 91 p 2

[Report by David Rudge]

[Text] Kafr Manda—Israeli Arab leaders yesterday welcomed the latest diplomatic developments as "a step in the right direction."

They said the visit of Secretary of State Baker and his second meeting with Palestinians from the territories was a "good sign that America means business."

Muhammad Zaydan, spokesman for the national committee of Arab council heads, said the recent pronouncements of government leaders accepting the idea of a regional conference with the participation of residents of the territories had given rise to cautious optimism among Israeli Arabs.

Most Arab citizens, he said, felt the time was ripe for a breakthrough in the peace process.

Zaydan, head of Kafr Manda local council in the Galilee, said the fact that this was Baker's second visit in the space of a few weeks, indicated that the U.S. already had a tentative peace program.

"His meeting with Palestinian representatives in both visits also indicates that the U.S. sees the Palestinian factor as an important element, without which the Middle East conflict cannot be settled," said Zaydan.

"In our opinion, the Palestinian problem must be resolved first and this, in turn, will lead to solutions of the other disputes in the region. As long as the Palestinian problem remains unresolved, the state of war between Israel and Arab countries in the region will remain."

Gaza Notable on Palestinian Delegation

TA0904195491 Jerusalem AL-SHA'B in Arabic 9 Apr 91 pp 1, 7

[Text] Gaza—Mr. As'ad al-Saftawi has said that he does not believe that there is a single personality in the occupied territories who would be willing to meet with Baker spontaneously unless Baker asks for such a meeting.

Al-Saftawi added that the U.S. State Department is very well aware of all aspects of the Palestinian problem. He said: "We do not want to produce new resolutions. There are resolutions approved by the Security Council and the United Nations. If the United States wants to prove its credibility on the Middle East problem, it should use the same scale and standards that it used in the Gulf conflict. It must work seriously to implement the Security Council resolutions. The entire Palestinian people wish for these resolutions to be translated into practice and be implemented to resolve this conflict, which has lasted more than 40 years."

With regard to a Palestinian delegation for talks with Israel, al-Saftawi said: "The Palestinian delegation cannot be merely from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. There must be a green light from the Palestinian leadership abroad. I believe that the leadership gave this light in the past, but there are certain reservations by all those who are interested in forming this delegation. The delegation should be proportionately represented by the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It should also include refugees, because the issue of the refugees is the basic issue in the Palestinian problem."

On his expectations from the visit by U.S. Secretary of State Baker, al-Saftawi said: "I do not wish to speak much about Baker's visit. Up until now, the United States has failed to prove its credibility in dealing with Arab issues, as it did in the Gulf conflict."

Qatzav Rejects Settlements, Talks Link

TA1004052591 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0405 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Telephone interview with Transportation Minister Moshe Qatzav by Me'ir Einstein—live]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Einstein] Minister Qatzav, how do you take the remarks by James Baker in reference to Ari'el Sharon's declarations? I repeat what our political correspondent Arye Golan said a few minutes ago, that Baker said that Sharon's declarations on the settlement issue are aimed at harming efforts to advance peace.

[Qatzav] I do not accept the U.S. secretary of state's declaration. It is the right of every Jew to settle in New York, Washington, Los Angeles, London, Paris, and also within Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. We make sure not to settle immigrants in Judaea and Samaria for reasons unlinked to the Americans, for completely different reasons, but it is the right of each Jew to live anywhere he wishes. There is no sovereign rule over Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip besides the Israeli military government. The status of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip has been known since 1922. During the 70 years thereafter, no administration there was given international recognition. After Jews were murdered during the 1929 riots and in other events, who can and who has the moral right to prevent Jewish settlement? We are now differentiating between settlements and negotiations....

[Einstein] But that is what the Americans are in fact doing.

[Qatzav] The United States is wrong about that.

Sharon: Settlement 'Ongoing Process'

TA1004064891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Telephone interview with Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon by Gad Becker—live]

[Text] [Becker] Good morning, Mr. Sharon.

[Sharon] Good morning.

[Becker] James Baker is quoted today as saying that Sharon is sabotaging peace at a time when we are on the threshold of a historic moment. What do you have to say about that?

[Sharon] If that report is correct, then the secretary is wrong. Like all Jews who live in the State of Israel, and as somebody who has already witnessed all the wars, I am in favor of a peace process. But I am in favor of a process that will bring true peace, which calls for different moves both in the Middle East and between us and the Arabs of Eretz Yisra'el. A wide-ranging concept in the Middle East calls first of all for a stop to arms procurement, disarmament, and arms destruction. What sort of peace can there be if the Arab states, especially Syria, are arming themselves at an unprecedented pace?

[Becker] If we return to the question you started to answer before, then the following could be understood: yes, I am for peace, but the process I foresee is completely different. The Americans are therefore perhaps right when they say that your declarations on settlements are, among other things, aimed at harming the process now in progress, which you oppose.

[Sharon] No, that is baseless. I pointed very clearly to the steps that should be taken. I have been doing that for a long time. Settlement or Zionism, like security, is not a matter of timing, it is an ongoing process which calls for daily activities. It has no connection with the current visit. There is no doubt that the presentation of the matter by me in recent days and weeks and the only realistic solution that can bring peace—and I expect peace and want peace—is certainly aimed at trying-....[break in transmission]

[Becker] Mr. Sharon, hello again. The question that angered the Americans yesterday was the plan to expand settlements. Prime Minister Shamir is again quoted as saying that the decision has not yet been approved, and without the Cabinet's approval, it will not be implemented. Is it then possible that your plan will not be implemented?

[Sharon] The government plan for settlement in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip—which is not aimed at immigrants, and we have clarified that again and again—is being implemented in accordance with government policy, is based on the government's basic guidelines, and has the full knowledge of the prime minister. There is no need for government approval for putting up a building in this or that settlement. We never deal with those building in Galilee or Ari'el in Samaria. That has been decided by the government's basic guidelines. We can, of course, bring up the basic guidelines for discussion again in the Cabinet, which I do not believe anybody wants. Otherwise, everything is being conducted according to government policy, its basic guidelines, and with the full knowledge of the prime minister. The issues are overt, there is no reason to hide them, they are known to the Knesset Finance Committee and the government. I talk about it openly, there is no reason to hide anything, there is no issue of timing. Zionism, like security, is not a matter of timing; it is an ongoing process which calls for daily activities.

[Becker] Then does that mean the prime minister got mixed up yesterday or made a mistake?

[Sharon] I assume that the reports might be incorrect. I was not present during the conversation. I am just explaining things.

[Becker] Will you oppose raising the issue for Cabinet discussion?

[Sharon] Why should I oppose something that was done according to the government's policy and is based on its basic guidelines, and with the full knowledge of the prime minister? Why should I therefore oppose it? If somebody wants to bring the government's basic guidelines up for debate, I will certainly accept that. We must, however, understand that we are not waiting for some decision. It is an ongoing activity over years which began in certain areas under previous Alignment governments, and is based on a political concept starting in 1977, when Menahem Begin set up his first government. We are carrying out this policy all the time, and to our satisfaction, we should point out that today, there are 150 settlements in Judaea and Samaria, with a population of 105,000, not including the neighborhoods within Jerusalem's municipal boundaries. It is an ongoing activity and is being carried out throughout the country, with one exception: In Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip we do not build for immigrants.

[Becker] Mr. Sharon, on a related issue, but linked to party politics, the convening of the Likud Central Committee. During Baker's earlier visit, you said that you are considering initiating a meeting of the Likud Central Committee, and you say again today that you will call on the prime minister to bring about such a session. Should we expect a Central Committee meeting, and for what purpose?

[Sharon] We are currently in a somewhat strange situation. All the issues are being discussed without them being raised in the Cabinet or the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs. The Cabinet, in fact, learns about what is happening from the media. Running a government on the most vital issues in such a way is no doubt poor administration. Where did we discuss a regional conference? What is the conference? Where did we discuss the release of terrorists? We are talking about the release of 1,200 terrorists without getting anything in return, without any reciprocity, without any discussion in the Cabinet or the Ministerial Committee on National Security Affairs. That is certainly bad government. I preach democratization in the Middle East. I ask myself whether what is happening here is in order. What does it mean when it is said: To talk with every Palestinian? Does that include those who danced on the roofs when the Scud missiles wreacked destruction on Tel Aviv and its environs and threatened the entire country? What about Syria? The Syrians are invited by using a phrase such as, it will pay them. Which Syria, the one that has enormous quantities of arms and is procuring more Scuds, and has chemical weapons? Even somebody whose views are distant from mine—I am referring to Mr. Rabin—finds it necessary to get up and say that the Golan Heights must not be returned even for peace. That is somebody who served in the Army for many years and was chief of staff.

[Becker] Do you plan to raise those questions before the Central Committee at the earliest possible time?

[Sharon] It is ironic that representatives of a large national movement which set up a government, perhaps the most nationalist government ever set up in Israel's history, is creating the corridor for a Palestinian state. It is not possible for no discussion to take place on those issues in any forum; therefore I believe it is only natural and correct for the democratic process to take place. We should convene the bodies that sent us to the government to express their views on whether they support what is currently taking place or not. That certainly seems to me something that should be done and I will appeal to the prime minister regarding this matter.

Baker Queried on Palestinian Representation

TA0904150791 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 8 Apr 91 pp 1, 7

[Editorial: "Questions Which We Would Like To Pose to Baker!"]

[Text] The meeting held last month in Jerusalem between a number of Palestinians and the U.S. secretary of state aroused a debate among Palestinians inside and outside the occupied territories—a debate that creeped into the pages of some Arab newspapers and was renounced by some political statements.

The meeting scheduled to be held tomorrow between the U.S. secretary and a number of other Palestinians occupies top priority as a subject of debate among our kinfolk in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

We deem it our duty to pose again some of the questions being asked by the residents here, in the hope that Palestinian public opinion will be taken into consideration, and in the conviction that the soundness of any political position is determined by proximity to the residents' feelings and aspirations.

Everyone is aware that the United States ceased its dialogue with the PLO last year. Will anyone ask the U.S. secretary a clear question: Is his meeting with the Palestinians—who are reiterating that they have been authorized by the PLO and are stressing that the PLO is the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people—tantamount to a resumption of that dialogue with the PLO?

Another question which should be raised with the U.S. secretary by those meeting with him is this: Does your excellency consider us as representing the PLO? If the answer is negative, then Baker's interlocutors will know how to handle the situation, but if the answer is affirmative, then what is the use of continuing the discussion? The PLO's address and telephone number are certainly known to the U.S. secretary!

There is another point that can determine the Palestinian position and maintain its unity, namely Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, issued by the Security Council as a sign of international legitimacy. This is the legitimacy whose banner was borne by Washington in the Gulf and was reinforced by Security Council Resolution 687, which imposed conditions on Iraq without any negotiations, discussion, or dialogue with Iraq! Why, then, is the United States trying now to circumvent the United Nations and settle the Palestinian problem separately in the American style? Does Washington recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination? And what is the view of the other permanent and non-permanent Security Council members about these U.S. efforts?

We put forward these questions, affirming that they are the questions that we hear daily from the average Palestinian. We also emphasize that we are very eager to see an active and balanced U.S. role that would realize international legitimacy with the aim of achieving a just and durable peace in the region. We raise these questions, because last but not least, we want our masses to avoid new disappointments and refrain from wagering on a U.S. position that faces a thousand question marks!

Arens on Territories, Peace Process, Iraq

PM0504143291 Paris LE FIGARO in French 4 Apr 91 p 3

[Interview with Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens by Pierre Rousselin in Jerusalem—date not given]

[Text] Jerusalem—[Rousselin] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has suggested that "confidence-building" measures be taken in the occupied territories to improve the atmosphere and lead to negotiations. What measures do you plan to take?

[Arens] Talking of confidence-building measures in the territories results from a misunderstanding. This can be the case when two nations or two armies live in mutual suspicion and you want to dispel their fears. In the territories, we are witnessing terrorist actions: Women are being stabbed in the streets. I do not see how you can create a climate of confidence with such murderers. Some people would like us to reduce the army's presence in the territories as a confidence-building measure. I would like to do so. But the army is only present because we are convinced that, without it, there would be a resurgence of violence.

[Rousselin] Do you plan to reopen the universities closed at the start of the intifadah more than three years ago?

[Arens] I would like to open them. We opened Bethlehem University six months ago. It is a success. We are envisaging opening others. But this has nothing to do with a climate of confidence. The reason we have not already done it is that we fear violence, because those universities were hotbeds of tension in the past. What are being presented as confidence-building measures are decisions that I plan to make but only when I am convinced that they will lead to a reduction in violence.

[Rousselin] Is there any possibility of some prisoners being released to mark Ramadan?

[Arens] We are contemplating that. There are far too many people in prison. But I would not like to decide on a large-scale release and witness a wave of murders. It is not a question of confidence or a political question, it is a question of security.

[Rousselin] What do you plan to do to improve the economic situation in the territories?

[Arens] The economic situation, particularly in Gaza, is the root of the problem. Living conditions in the refugee camps are indescribable and they worsened during the war, with the loss of Palestinian jobs in the Israeli economy. Unless we find a means of remedying this situation, nothing can be done. But the necessary financial resources go beyond Israel's means. So far, the international community has not responded to our appeals. This may be changing. The EC and Japan seem ready to make a contribution. The Arab countries have always wanted to maintain the refugee camps for purely cynical reasons, but Saudi Arabia might change its attitude.

[Rousselin] Why not freeze the settlements as a goodwill gesture?

[Arens] Everybody must recognize that Jews and Arabs are living together and will have to continue to live together. This is irreversible. Any solution will have to take account of that fact. The Jewish cities in Judea and

Samaria are like any French city. Their inhabitants will have children. They will have to expand

[Rousselin] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir refuses to meet with the Palestinians who were received by James Baker, because they support the PLO. As the man responsible for the administration of the territories, you meet with Palestinians. What are your criteria?

[Arens] I am prepared to talk with any Palestinian Arab who has not broken the law. I have had frequent meetings with Ilyas Frayj the mayor of Bethlehem, who was a member of the delegation received by Baker....

[Rousselin] But the vast majority of Palestinians in the territories support the PLO....

[Arens] In many cases, they just automatically say that. They only agree to do so out of fear of being killed by the PLO and also by Hamas fundamentalists. Israel does not want to talk with the PLO because it speaks for the Palestinian diaspora and claims the right of return for 5 million Palestinians. That would amount to the destruction of Israel. We will not discuss the return of the descendants of those who left 42 years ago.

[Rousselin] What do you think of the conciliatory attitude adopted by France toward the PLO?

[Arens] France is the last of the Mohicans.... Seriously, I have never understood the importance France attaches to that terrorist organization. For the rest of the world, and even for many Palestinians in the territories, the PLO has lost a great deal of its influence. It is losing its influence because it is no longer financed by Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, but also because it sided with Saddam Husayn in the hope that he would destroy Israel with his chemical weapons. Anybody who understands that will understand that the PLO cannot be a partner in a peace process. There must certainly be some French people who understand that.

[Rousselin] How can a Palestinian delegation be formed to engage in dialogue? Some government members say that elections may not be necessary....

[Arens] I think that elections are necessary. Nobody but the population of the territories is entitled to choose its representatives. They must be elected. That is easier said than done because there is no democratic tradition. But it must be done. There is no other solution.

[Rousselin] Do you think that municipal elections would be easier to organize?

[Arens] That is a possibility. Municipal elections would have the advantage of simplifying the electoral procedure, avoiding the hitherto insurmountable obstacles to general elections. That would be much simpler and local elected representatives could be regarded as political representatives for the purposes of dialogue.

[Rousselin] What role can Jordan play?

[Arens] Jordan has a very important role to play. It is the country with which we have the longest border. But this does not exempt us from reaching an arrangement with the Arab population of the West Bank and Gaza. And that population does not regard Jordan as their spokesman.

[Rousselin] Could a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation facilitate dialogue?

[Arens] I do not know whether it would be easier to talk directly to elected representatives from the territories or to a broader delegation including Jordanians. It is up to them to decide. The situation is complicated by the fact that Jordan is a Palestinian state in all but name. In saying that, I am not taking a political stance, but pointing to the real demographic and geographical situation.

[Rousselin] In southern Lebanon, the Lebanese Army is trying to prevent attacks on Israel. Do you think it is possible to reach a solution in which the Israeli-controlled security zone will no longer be necessary?

[Arens] Not at present. It is true that there is a considerable improvement in the situation in Lebanon, but that stability has only been achieved by Syria's control over Lebanon. The Lebanese Government is simply a Syrian puppet and the Syrians are openly hostile to Israel and are providing bases for terrorist organizations. We have sacrificed the lives of many Israeli soldiers to guarantee the security of northern Israel and we will do nothing which could jeopardize that security. As long as Syria encourages terrorism, it is very difficult to be optimistic.

[Rousselin] How do you envisage arms control in the region. Is the reduction of conventional forces an absolute priority for you?

[Arens] Israel faces a threat from a potential coalition of Arab countries which have more arms than the NATO countries had at the end of the cold war. It took the United States five months to prepare to confront the Iraqi Army. We do not even have five days to prepare if we are attacked. If we want to stabilize the region, we absolutely must reduce conventional forces. This is a very important question for France. I hope that it will have learned the lesson of the war. If the influx of arms is not halted, how long will it take Saddam Husayn or his successor to rebuild the world's fourth biggest army? The Syrians are already busy buying considerable armaments.

[Rousselin] With regard to Saddam Husayn, do you not think that the allies stopped halfway and ought to have continued the war until he was ousted?

[Arens] They did not finish the job. That is a fact. But I am not among those who are criticizing an operation which, after all, was a great success under the U.S. President's leadership. George Bush deserves great credit for having led the free world in stopping Saddam Husayn.

[Rousselin] During the war, you said that the conflict would not end without Israeli intervention. In retrospect, do you not regret not receiving the Americans' agreement for action?

[Arens] Our objective was to help eliminate the Iraqi missiles. That threat continued until the last day. If the war had lasted one week longer, you would have seen Israeli army action against the Iraqi missiles.

[Rousselin] You aroused admiration for your calm attitude during the war. But what was your state of mind during the first night, when the first missile attack took place?

[Arens] I did something which I was not supposed to do. I was at home, and as soon as I heard the alarm, I got into my car and came to the office to obtain all the necessary information.

[Rousselin] At that time, did you think they were chemical warheads?

[Arens] We did not know. The first reports we had indicated that they were indeed chemical warheads. It turned out that a missile had fallen near a gasoline station. What the instruments picked up proved to be gasoline fumes rather than poisonous gases. During the first hour, we thought that some missiles were armed with chemical warheads. But we continued our checks....

[Rousselin] Do you think we will see progress in the peace process between now and next summer?

[Arens] Many people hope so. But we must be realistic and admit that the peace process in the Near East is very slow. Why? Because many Arab leaders do not think they really need peace with Israel. I sincerely hope that the Saudis want peace, but I am not convinced that the Saudi king and princes think they absolutely must make peace with Israel. Some of them probably think it is very risky and that it might be better for them not to have peace.

Levi Urges Decisive Action Against Saddam

TA1004092091 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0900 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] The Knesset has decided to endorse the remarks of Foreign Minister David Levi who called on the world to act decisively and immediately against Saddam Husayn because of his actions against the Kurds. Levi said the world must not make do with humanitarian aid—food and medicine—and that a tyrant like Saddam must be given an unequivocal ultimatum. Minister Levi said Israel is organizing aid for the Kurds.

Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reports that the Knesset also resolved that the contents of the foreign minister's speech would be brought to James Baker's attention. Our correspondent points out that during the debate on the fate of the Kurds, there were some 30 Knesset members in the plenum.

First Group of Arab Detainees Released

TA1004103291 Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] The first batch of prisoners and detainees, some 200 people, were released from Qezi'ot detention center. Their release was decided on by the defense minister as a gesture to mark 'Id al- Fitr. Our correspondent Arye Gus reports that between 1,000 and 1,200 prisoners and detainees, who were not convicted of hostile terrorist activities and whose hands are not covered in blood, will be released. Between 100 and 200 will be released daily in the Central Command's region and some 200 to 300 in the Gaza Strip.

Al-Masri Previews Geneva Meeting With Baker

CM1004152091 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 10 Apr pp 1,4

[Text] Amman, 9 Apr (PETRA)—Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri has emphasized the importance of Jordan's role in finding a solution to the Palestinian problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict in its capacity as the primary confrontation state, because of its close connection with the Palestinian issue, and for a number of other reasons.

In an interview with JNA and Jordanian Television today, al-Masri described his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, which will take place in Geneva on Friday, as important because of the developments that are expected to take place in the region concerning the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

He expressed the view that the meeting will take the form of consultations and general discussion of the situation and the American ideas, which are in the process of being shaped, and Jordan's role in the peace process. Al-Masri said that Jordan will express its views on these ideas and will stick to the principles it has defined. He added: Jordan is looking to the future with an open mind.

He said an opportunity may exist to open a new door, because the United States has been stating constantly its intense desire, and perhaps its commitment, to solve the Middle East issue.

On the U.S. secretary of state's current tour of the region, Foreign Minister al-Masri said that the U.S. secretary of state must have gathered some ideas during his first visit to the area in March. These ideas have begun to take shape in Washington. He explained that Jordan does not know exactly what these American ideas are, because the U.S. secretary of state did not visit Jordan during his first tour and he had not met any Jordanian official at that time.

The fact that the U.S. secretary of state is making a second visit to the area indicates that the U.S. Administration has something specific in mind, he added. This could become clear when Mr. Baker returns to Washington. Meanwhile, I cannot talk about these matters as one who possesses information. I am expressing estimations and judgments on things that are taking place before our eyes.

Regarding his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Geneva, al-Masri said that Mr. Baker, who is visiting our area for the second time, has expressed his desire to meet Jordanian officials. Agreement was reached between the two countries for the meeting to take place outside the Arab region, in a neutral capital, Geneva, which is known as a venue for numerous international meetings.

Asked whether Jordan and the concerned Arab states are coordinating on current American efforts to solve the Middle East crisis, he confirmed the existence of such coordination and consultations with some Arab states, recalling His Majesty King Husayn's contacts with some brother Arab leaders and the foreign minister's tour of the Maghreb states.

Al-Masri said that in light of his meeting with Mr. Baker in Geneva and learning the American ideas, Jordan will intensify its contacts with the Arab states, because we certainly wish to unify our position, not only with the concerned Arab states, namely the confrontation states, but with many other Arab states.

Baker Said To Face Israeli 'Intransigence'

NC0904151991 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 9 Apr 91 pp 1, 15

[Editorial: "Will Baker's Task Collide With Israeli Intransigence?!"]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker will begin his new tour in the region by visiting Israel today. In preparation for his meeting with Baker, Israeli Prime Minister Shamir chaired an inner-Cabinet meeting attended by his foreign and defense ministers.

It seems that Shamir deliberately sent signals on certain issues to the U.S. Administration and the European Community in the hope that Baker would not impose them on Israel. These issues are first, Israel's categorical rejection of the principle of "land for peace"; second, its refusal to negotiate with the PLO; and third, its insistence on holding a "regional conference" with the Arab parties concerned with the conflict instead of an international conference.

It seems that Israel is about to propose new ideas and suggestions to Baker about which Shamir and his Cabinet members have remained silent and refused to talk, but have deliberately leaked their outlines to the Israeli press and news media.

Hence, we can say that Baker will collide with a new type of Israeli intransigence. The Bush Administration itself will have two options. It can either commit itself to international legitimacy, including UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, and the principle of "land for peace," which requires pressuring Israel or forcing it to accept all that to make the U.S. effort succeed, or it can respond to Shamir's ideas and proposals and turn its back on international legitimacy and Security Council resolutions. This will again expose U.S. credibility to a difficult crisis that might paralyze, disrupt, freeze, or even thwart the U.S. role.

During his visits to Arab capitals, his meeting with the Palestinian delegation in the occupied territories, and then his meeting with Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri in Geneva next Friday, James Baker will understand that

there is firm Palestinian and Arab commitment to international legitimacy and the principle of "land for peace."

James Baker will also find that any talk about peace without insistence on the inevitability of Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, the Golan, and southern Lebanon, will be futile and a waste of both time and effort. He will also learn that disregarding the Palestinian role through the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, will not benefit the peace process.

At any rate, observers expect Baker to have new ideas or the form of a new U.S. initiative to propose in the capitals he will visit during his current tour. Meanwhile, they believe that these ideas will be mortgaged to the nature of the atmosphere prevailing in his talks and meetings with Arab officials and Shamir's government.

Palestinian and Arab circles in general have cast doubt on the sincerity and credibility of the new U.S. move. A few hours remain before the initial features of the U.S. position and the degree of its sincerity are revealed in Baker's hands. It is important that the Palestinian and Arab positions are clear and candid. The Bush Administration must choose between the success of its move, and its complete bias toward Israel and torpedoing the new opportunity for peace.

'Slight Hope' Seen in U.S. Peace Efforts

NC0904144791 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 9 Apr 91 pp 1, 16

Editorial: "The U.S. Initiative and the Israeli Maneuver"]

[Text] Israel has greeted U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's arrival with noticeable intensified political activity. This intensified activity comes at the same time as wide expectations of a coming agreement on holding a regional conference to establish peace in the Middle East under the supervision of the United States and probably the Soviet Union.

With its renewed talk on expanding settlement programs and its repeated rejection of the principle of land for peace, Israel seems to be telling the visiting U.S. Secretary of State that if it is allowed to talk about peace, it is not allowed to talk about ending the occupation; the return of the land to its legitimate owners.

It seems that the government of the extremist right in Israel has decided to manipulate the international efforts being made toward peace. On the other hand, the hostility of its language and tone has intensified to any idea that envisages the possible withdrawal of the Zionist occupation forces from the occupied territories, as proclaimed by the pillars of Shamir's Government on the eve of Baker's arrival in occupied Jerusalem yesterday.

Hence, we expect Israel to exhibit pro forma flexibility in its position on holding a regional conference so as to absorb the wave of international demands for rapid movement to resolve the Palestine question, and to maintain at the same time the essence of its rejection of any concessions on the land issue until the current diplomatic efforts to establish just and comprehensive peace exhaust their momentum and the concerned parties are dragged into a vicious circle.

Therefore, the United States, which has placed itself on trial again with regard to the Arab-Israeli conflict, is called upon to clarify its policy toward Israel's repeated statements which threaten to abort the peace efforts and to torpedo all endeavors to implement the principles of international legitimacy using the same criteria applied to the Gulf crisis.

Although the U.S. record in this regard does not encourage optimism about a possible act of diplomatic courage toward Israel's long intransigence, this time we will allow ourselves the slight hope that Washington will pressure its spoiled strategic ally and force it to accept the concept of peace and the realistic and nonescalatory policies it dictates.

The United States, which today shoulders the task of invigorating the stumbling Middle East peace efforts, cannot continue to please Israel and satisfy the desires and inclinations of the most extremist Israeli Government if Washington is really seeking to invest in this new historic opportunity for establishing a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on the principles of international legitimacy and UN Security Council and United Nations resolutions

Paper Criticizes Israeli 'Peace Project'

NC0404163291 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 4 Apr 91 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Initial Glance at the Israeli Project"]

[Text] Israel announced yesterday a so-called peace project that was presented by Shamir to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker during the latter's visit last month. At first glance, the project appears to have three objectives. The first is blackmailing the Arab states in advance, forcing them to declare an end to the state of war with Israel and to the Arab embargo on companies and institutions cooperating with it, and forcing them to renounce what the project termed terrorist acts, as an initiative by which the Arabs would show their good intentions toward Israel. The second objective is to obtain implicit Arab approval for excluding the PLO from any negotiations through the participation of the Arab states and Palestinians chosen by Israel in these negotiations, not by the PLO. The third objective focuses on dragging the Arabs into accepting the Camp David accords, because Israel announced that its project is based on these accords. Hence, it is clear that the Israeli project aims at liquidating the Palestine question, subjugating all Arabs, and destroying the Palestinian ranks

themselves. It is obvious that this contradicts a real peace that would restore stability and prosperity to the region.

It is worth remembering that Jordan has repeatedly stressed, through King Husayn, its commitment to peace based on international legitimacy that would restore to the Palestinians their usurped land and their right to self-determination on it. Jordan has committed itself to a vital and constructive role that can never be an alternative to the Palestinian role nor contradict it. In light of these constants, the suspicious dimensions of the Israeli project become clear, and the need for a firm and unified Arab position on it is stressed, so that the project does not become a weapon in the hands of the Israeli aggressors with which to dismember what is left of the Arab ranks.

The real solution to the Palestine question and the Arab-Israeli conflict requires in the first place an Israeli pledge to respect and implement international resolutions on the question and the conflict, and not to interfere in Palestinian affairs: The Palestinians alone choose their representatives to the negotiations. It is important to stress that only Israel's implementation of these resolutions can be a prelude to ending the state of war and the other consequences of the Israeli aggressors practices.

The Arabs, under all conditions, have proven their desire to establish real peace in the region. Events have shown that the Camp David accords are pointless. Consequently, it is difficult to believe in the sincerity of any project that blackmails the Arabs in advance while claiming the need to stress good intentions, is based on out-moded agreements while claiming that they are an inevitable foundation for peace, or that imposes representatives and a future on the Palestinians in isolation from their choice.

Muslim Brotherhood Rally Attracts 15,000

JN0604114991 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 6 Apr 91 p 3

[By Nirmin Murad, JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Text] Al-Mahattah—Nearly 15,000 people, mostly supporters of the Muslim Brotherhood Movement, crowded the football field in this old suburb of Amman to mark the occasion of Fatih Mecca Day (the anniversary of Prophet Muhammad reentering the Holy City after being driven out to the town of Medina earlier on) and to condemn Israel and U.S. policies in the Middle East.

Banners and speeches by the spiritual leader of the movement and Brotherhood deputies urged the people to speak against the presence of troops belonging to the U.S.-led coalition on Iraqi territories and to reject peaceful proposals to end the Palestine problem. The speakers also condemned a U.N. resolution setting tough terms for a formal Gulf war ceasefire and urged Iraq not to accept it.

Banners denounced U.S. involvement in the region and condemned the U.N. "double standard" in dealing with the region's problems. "No to America, no to the state of the Jews on the land of Palestine, no to the surrender peace plans and no to the proposals of (U.S. president George) Bush," urged Shaykh Humam Sa'id, a lower house deputy.

"This meeting is to (prove wrong) people and Americans who thought they could bury the will of the people after they were able to manipulate Arab leaders," Shaykh Sa'id told the crowds who chanted God is Greater (Allah Akbar). Shaykh Sa'id did not name any of the Arab leaders whom he attacked in his speech.

Observers and analysts had earlier said that the rally was particularly aimed at reasserting the movement's popularity among the masses and testing their strength in the aftermath of the Gulf war and the Brotherhood's joining the government last January.

The organisers, officials of the Muslim Brotherhood, had said they expected some 50,000 people to attend, roughly half of the turnout at a massive rally held at the peak of the Gulf crisis last October.

The analysts and observers had contended that the Brotherhood, and the Islamic trend generally, had lost ground among traditional supporters following Iraq's military defeat in the Gulf war.

But spokesman for the Brotherhood parliamentary bloc, Deputy Ahmad Qutaysh al-Azayidah, told the crowds that the rally was held, "to prove that campaigns undermining the movement's popularity are false."

"We do not want popularity for people but a popularity for the ideology of Islam," Mr. al-Azayidah said in his speech.

Participants in Friday's rally came from many parts of the Kingdom, as buses which hauled them to the makeshift stadium indicated the names of various societies based in towns and cities outside Amman.

On the highway leading to the meeting place small marches of 100-200 people carrying the slogans of the rally were chanting anti-U.S. songs.

"No to land for peace solution... it is like apostasy for Islam," said one of many banners hoisted by the marchers and the crowds which filled about three quarters of the field's area. Most banners carried the emblem of the Brotherhood.

"Our meeting is a curse on those who thought they have buried the will of the people for years to come," Shaykh Sa'id told the crowd who were segregated by sex. The females' clad in black and white dresses and scarves filed into the field, after the men were seated, holding the hands of their children.

Mr. 'Abd-al-Rahman Khalifah, spiritual leader of the Brotherhood, lashed out at the United Nations and said that it has lost its credibility and respect when it misapplied international law.

"The U.N. has been dragged to precipice. It will only regain its power and respect when human rights light the path of the U.N. again," Mr. Khalifah said in his speech.

In large advertisement carried by the Arabic dailies during the past week, the Brotherhood highlighted three slogans for the rally: "No to the elimination of the Palestinian cause," "No to American-Atlantic presence on Iraqi and Gulf soil" and "No to the degrading American conditions on Iraq."

"The Brotherhood condemns the U.N. conditions included in the Resolution (687) (on Iraq) because there is humiliation and surrender in every word of it, betrayal in every line," said Shaykh Sa'id, who is also a mosque preacher.

"We urge Iraq to reject these American terms... reject them and we are with you," he said.

Chants of "Allah Akbar... it is better to die than to live in humiliation" interrupted Shaykh Sa'id and other speeches.

Allies Accused of Violating Iraq's Sovereignty

JN0904102191 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 9 Apr 91 p 4

[Editorial: "Not a Free-for-All"]

[Text] International concern, particularly Western, for the plight of Iraqi Kurds is understandable. For us, however, the concern is not only humanitarian; nor is it guilt-ridden. The Kurds are our people. They are Iraqis first and foremost and our concern for them is no less than for the rest of the entire 18 million Iraqis who are suffering from the immense devastation that the allied war wreaked on their country.

The "international community"—if that is what one should call the coalition led by the U.S.—has suddenly galvanised into action to help the refugees stranded on the Iraqi-Turkish border within Iraqi territory and, of course, in Turkey itself. Perhaps the coalition feels guilty and a sense of remorse over encouraging the Kurds to rebel against the Iraqi government, but that is besides the point.

No-one, least of all the allies themselves, needed any detailed information on the devastation the allied assault left in Iraq and how the Iraqis are living under sub-human conditions after the Gulf war. But we did not hear anyone in Washington, London or Paris raising concern over their suffering or mobilising hundreds of million dollars to help them in the five weeks since the ceasefire in the war. Isn't it fair to ask that all Iraqis whose lifelines have been shattered deserve equal treatment if the concern behind help is humanitarian? After all, the suffering of the tens of thousands of Iraqis who fled their towns to the border is not dramatically different from Iraqis elsewhere in the country.

And why hasn't the "international community" responded positively to Iraq's declared willingness to accept a United Nations mission to witness the situation of Iraqis and to cooperate with the world body in relief efforts?

Iraq has declared an amnesty to all Kurds, except those who have committed serious crimes. Why didn't the international community start work from the Baghdad end of affairs and encourage the return of all refugees to their hometowns in view of the amnesty as well as the pledge of democratic reforms in the country?

No one is disputing the miserable state of the thousands of refugees massed in northern Iraq or their urgent need for help. But the way to do that is through the proper channel if one respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

No, the "international community" had to go all the way to violate the sovereignty of Iraq by entering its territory and airspace to drop relief supplies to the refugees from military planes and also had the audacity to threaten dire action if the Iraqi authorities countered the violation of Iraqi territory.

For all practical purposes, it would seem, the allies feel free to subject Iraq to any kind of abuse and do not for a moment care for international laws and norms when it comes to the shattered country and its people.

But, let them be aware, Iraq may be shattered but it cannot be the ground for a free-for-all. For those who think otherwise, a timely reminder would be: Someone, somewhere, sometime will have to bear the consequences.

Attempt To Move Hostages Reportedly Thwarted

PM1004103091 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 Apr 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "Foiling Attempt To Move Hostages In Lebanon"]

[Excerpt] Beirut, exclusive, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Informed sources in Beirut have revealed that an attempt by one of the groups holding the Western hostages to move them to hamper the efforts to release them and to set new conditions has been foiled.

The attempt was foiled a short time before U.S. President George Bush appealed to Iran to use its influence to free the hostages, regarding such a role as an essential start for any improvement in relations between Washington and Tehran.

The sources said that determining the hostages' whereabouts is a complex process in which many changes have occurred in the past because of internal and external security and political developments. The sources added that the method originally adopted was to distribute them in remote geographical areas so that no foreign power could launch an attack to free them or reach all of them at once. The sources pointed out that, for example, the hostages used to be detained in places subject to tight security and in houses in remote villages where they were forced to live with families. The sources said: At one point a number of hostages were held near the contact line in the Ra's al-Nab' area. Some were in the Hizballah stronghold in Bi'r al-'Abd. Others were in villages on the perimeter of Ba'labakk in al-Biqa'. The sources revealed that after the Syrian forces' return to Beirut in 1987, the kidnappers moved a number of the hostages to southern Lebanon to keep them away from any Syrian attempt to release them.

The sources said that at a later stage, after gaining control of villages in the western al-Biqa', the kidnappers started using that area as a place of detention for some hostages; but they stopped this for fear of Israeli operations such as that which resulted in the capture of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd from Jibshit village, where a number of hostages were reported to have been detained for some time.

The sources revealed that it was agreed in the past that to move hostages required the approval of three leaders in the fundamentalist group holding the hostage card, despite the various names used during the hostages' detention. The regular changing of the hostages' whereabouts was intended to confuse the parties collecting information about them. It was often done using small trucks or cars bearing diplomatic plates. Medical care is provided by doctors from the organization itself.

The sources said that a few days ago, amid the disputes shaking the Lebanese Hizballah over the release of the hostages and the Hizballah's future in Lebanon, the guards of a Western hostage were surprised by the arrival of a military officer who asked for the hostage to be moved. The sources added that an argument took place between the person in charge of the hostage's security and the military officer and that it nearly developed into a clash, especially after the former made some contacts from which it was discovered that the three-man committee knew nothing about the step and that a group was trying to change the whereabouts of some hostages in order to thwart the efforts to release them. The sources said the group is known for its past links with the hard-line wing in Iran and that the move was perhaps intended to thwart Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's steps, together with the mediation Damascus is conducting between Tehran and Washington.

The sources emphasized that following the incident the fundamentalist organization's leadership received a serious warning from influential quarters to the effect that it was unacceptable for disputes to affect the hostage issue. The sources said that commitment to the previous method was emphasized, namely, not to change the hostages' place of detention except with the approval of the committee concerned. [passage omitted]

Syria, Egypt To Discuss Resolution 425 With Baker

NC0904211591 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has asked the Syrian and Egyptian presidents to include discussions regarding the implementation of UN Resolution 425 on their agendas when the U.S. secretary of state holds talks in Damascus and Cairo. According to a statement issued by the Presidential Office's Information Department, the Syrian and Egyptian presidents complied with the request,.

Al-Hirawi, Junblatt Comment on Militias, Weapons

NC0604134891 Beirut Domestic Service in Arabic 0530 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] President Ilias al-Hirawi stressed the issue of disbanding the militias when he received a delegation of the international democratic youths union yesterday.

He said: We welcome assistance from all friendly countries to help Lebanon implement Resolution 425. We demand the dissolution of the militias, even the non-Lebanese ones. But at the same time we assure the Palestinian people that the Lebanese Government will take care of them and preserve their rights. We will not, however, allow them to remain armed because only the state's forces must (?prevail).

He added: All expatriates who had been forced to leave their homeland are urged to return.

Meanwhile, press reports say that the huge quantity of Palestinian weapons in the Beirut camps have been transferred to al-Biqa' as part of the measures designed to deal with the Palestinian weapons. [passage omitted]

Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] Leader Walid Junblatt has asserted the PSP's willingness to surrender all its weapons within a [word indistinct] plan according to which weapons will be surrendered and enlistment in the Lebanese Army, the Internal Security Forces, and in other institutions will be effected. [passage omitted]

In another development, Minister Sulayman Tony Franjiyah has decided to dissolve the militias of [word indistinct] al-Maradah and vacate all their positions and checkpoints in the North in implementation of a cabinet resolution disbanding the militias and establishing state authority over all the Lebanese territories. According to this decision, al-Maradah members withdrew from 40 positions in the Zgharta, al-Kurah, and al-Batrun areas and from 4 checkpoints between [place names indistinct]. Some 600 members were affected by the decision.

Lahd on Border Area Situation, Army Deployment

NC0904120091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Antoine Lahd, commander of the border militia, has said that the situation on the border area and Jazzin differs from that in the other Lebanese areas and needs a fair solution, because the situation in the area is not only internal but regional.

In an interview with AL-DIYAR, Lahd said that the deployment of the Lebanese army in the zones where the UN forces are operating will not affect the deployment of the South Lebanese Army [SLA]. He added: It is possible to talk about the fate of the SLA. When the solutions are ripe, we will know what we want and what our limits are.

Lahd also said the appointment of deputies is heresy and that it is better for the Chamber of Deputies to continue with its present number until the situation is stable and parliamentary elections are held.

In an interview with his own radio, Lahd said that the al-Ta'if accord has become a reality. He added: Despite its negative points, we hope that it will help stability. He said that the withdrawal of foreign forces from Lebanon depends on peace between Lebanon and Israel. He expressed hope that the Lebanese army deployed north of the occupied border strip would implement its missions, disarm [gunmen], and prevent infiltration. In such a case, it could be possible to cooperate with the army, Lahd added.

Fatah-Uprising Removes Heavy Weapons From Camps

NC1004072991 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0630 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Abu-Fadi Hammad, secretary general of Fatah-the Uprising, has said that the movement has completed the withdrawal of its heavy- and medium-caliber weapons from the camps in Beirut and al-Biqa'. He added that there is another mission for these weapons—fighting the Zionist occupation in the South.

Iranian Guard Withdrawal Linked to Israeli Move

NC1004075391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0615 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] The disbandment of non-Lebanese militias has hit another snag. Hadi Reza 'Askari, commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in Lebanon, has linked the Guard's withdrawal from Lebanon to Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon.

In an interview with AL-SAFIR, 'Askari said the Guard is not a militia; our mission is to train the people to fight Israel. He stressed said that the Guard came to Lebanon at the invitation of the Lebanese people, in coordination with Syria, and at the orders of Ayatollah Khomeyni. 'Askari said that the departure of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard from Lebanon requires Syrian-Iranian-Lebanese coordination.

'Awn Agrees To 'Principle' of Paying Funds

NC0704092091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic to Lebanon 0830 GMT 7 Apr 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has asserted that General Michel 'Awn will soon be able to depart Lebanon once the outstanding financial issues are settled.

He said a step forward has been achieved in negotiations on Gen. 'Awn's departure, because 'Awn has agreed to the principle of returning the funds to the state. He noted that what remain are some technicalities concerning the repayment of these funds.

Two Explosions Reported in Sidon

NC0904211091 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] REUTER reports that an explosive device went off on al-Sitt Nafisah Street in Sidon after 1800 today. REUTER said that only material damage was caused and the agency did not provide any further details. A car belonging to a member of Fatah—the Revolutionary Council that is led by Abu-Nidal [Sabri al-Banna] was the target of a bomb attack in Sidon this evening.

Eight Palestinians Wounded in 'Ayn al-Hulwah

NC0904153291 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1445 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] According to exclusive information from the south, clashes took place in 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp today between Palestinian elements who recently have been released by Syria and other pro-'Arafat elements. The clashes left eight Palestinians wounded.

President Al-Asad To Visit Moscow 'Very Soon'

PM0904132691 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Apr 91 pp 1, 4

[Sami 'Imarah report: "Al-Asad To Visit Moscow Soon"]

[Excerpts] Moscow, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Informed diplomatic sources have revealed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will visit the Soviet capital in the very near future. During his talks with Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev expressed his "wish to have an urgent personal meeting" with President al-Asad, whom he called a friend. [passage omitted]

On the subject of supplying Syria with weapons, the official Soviet sources said that "the Soviet Union affirms its determination to continue cooperation in all fields, including the defense field, while obviously taking account of the new world situation and the Soviet economy's limited capabilities in the present stage." [passage omitted]

The Soviet sources point out that in view of the causes and results of the crisis in the Gulf region, and in view of the internal opposition to the sale of Soviet weapons, President Gorbachev cannot return to the previous policy, especially in the field of arming Third World countries.

The sources emphasize that the Soviet Union will not fulfill many of the promises that it made during Syrian Defense Minister General Mustafa Talas' visit to the Soviet capital in February, but it will not cease to support Syria, which it says is playing a very important role for the sake of the region's issues and in resolving the Middle East problem, especially since the two sides' views of and positions on these problems are compatible. [passage omitted]

Al-Shar' Returns From Cairo 9 Apr

NC0904194291 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1815 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' returned to Damascus this afternoon following a brief visit to Cairo during which he delivered a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak. The foreign minister was seen off at Cairo airport by Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, senior foreign ministry officials, the Syrian ambassador in Cairo, and members of the Syrian Embassy.

Tunisian Foreign Minister Arrives 9 Apr

NC0904194391 Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 1815 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya arrived in Damascus this evening on a visit to the Syrian Arab Republic. He was welcomed upon arrival at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', the director of protocol at the Foreign Ministry, the Tunisian ambassador in Damascus, and members of the Tunisian Embassy.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, the Tunisian foreign minister said: I am pleased to express my pride at being in beloved Syria, this fraternal country for which we in Tunisia harbor all love and respect and with which we are linked by old relations based on respect, cooperation, and consultations.

He added: I am also pleased to carry a written message to President Hafiz al-Asad from President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali which aims at strengthening relations between fraternal Syria and Tunisia. He said that during this visit he will hold talks with Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on international issues of mutual interest, particularly issues of the Arab nation in these delicate circumstances. He will also hold talks with Syrian officials on ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation.

Ba'th Party Delegation Leaves To Visit China

NC1004094291 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0840 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Damascus, 10 Apr (SANA)—A delegation from the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party command, led by comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the party, left Damascus for Beijing this morning on a visit to the People's Republic of China at the invitation of the Chinese Communist Party.

The delegation will hold talks on strengthening the cooperation and friendship between the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the Chinese Communist Party and the two friendly countries of Syria and China.

The delegation will also exchange views with the Chinese leadership on the developments in the Arab region and eastern Asia, international developments in general, and the two parties' activities within the context of these developments.

At the end of the visit, the delegation will sign a program of cooperation between the two parties.

Afghanistan

Protest Issued to Pakistan on 'Inhumane' Behavior

LD0904162491 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] The Pakistani charge d'affaires in Kabul was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today and a strong protest from the ministry was conveyed to him by the ministry's first political department's director, with the following text:

As has been mentioned in previous communications of this ministry, Pakistan's regular units and militia took part in attack on Khowst using advanced weaponry which caused the martyrdom and injury of hundreds of our compatriots, the devastation of the city of Khowst, and the capture of a large number of citizens of the Republic of Afghanistan. Now that almost a week has passed since the bloody incidents of Khowst, the Republic of Afghanistan has acquired credible information about the city and about the inhumane and ruthless looting by the extremist opposition of the lives and material of its people and on the unlawful and inhumane treatment of war wounded and POW's of the Republic of Afghanistan by Pakistani officials. Their fiendish behavior is such that the city of Khowst is still full of the corpses of the martyrs; and the extremists, on the advice of Pakistani advisers, refuse to return the corpses of the martyrs to the Republic of Afghanistan and to bury them in accordance with the Islamic rituals of the people of Afghanistan.

This behavior of the government of Pakistan and the extremist opposition is against all human and moral norms and principles and norms of international law and human rights, and is a demonstration of the aggressive and hostile intentions of Pakistan against the people of Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly protests against the continuation of this policy of the government of Pakistan toward POW's, which is against the norms of human rights and against approved international conventions on POW's, and resolutely demands that Pakistan to treat the war wounded and POW's in line with the principles of human rights and accepted norms of international relations. It also demands that measures be immediately taken for the return of the martyrs, injured, and POW's to the Republic of Afghanistan.

Khaliqyar Reviews Peace Process With UN Envoy

LD0904173191 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] The press department of the Prime Ministry reports that esteemed Fazl Haq Khaliqyar, the prime minister of the Republic of Afghanistan, this afternoon received in his office His Excellency Benon Sevan, assistant and special envoy of the UN secretary general and the organizer of the humanitarian and economic aid to Afghanistan. During the meeting, which was attended by Sultan Husayn, first deputy minister of planning, and Mr. [name indistinct], the representative of the United Nations [name indistinct] His Excellency Benon Sevan informed the prime minister about the efforts being made by the UN secretary general toward achieving a peaceful solution [in Afghanistan] and cooperation regarding the reconstruction and revival of Afghanistan.

In return esteemed Khaliqyar explained the current situation in the country and spoke about the measures taken by the government of the Republic of Afghanistan in various socioeconomic areas, in particular understanding and talks between the Afghans for the cessation of war and the realization of the policy of national reconciliation. He considered the role of the United Nations regarding the search for a political solution to the questions of Afghanistan and the speeding up of the humanitarian assistance of that organization to the people of Afghanistan as effective and important in the process.

'Crushing Blows' Hit 'Warmonger Extremists'

LD0904163791 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 9 Apr 91

[All names as heard]

[Text] Units of the Kabul garrison inflicted crushing blows on the centers and positions of warmonger extremists who wanted to disrupt the peaceful life of the people of Logar by breaking the cease-fire. According a report by the BAKHTAR military section, as a result of the strikes a number of extremists including four mercenary Wahhabis—Abu-Omar, Abu-Mawzon, Abu-Hamid and [words indistinct]—were crushed and a number of others including three Wahhabis—Abu-Sulaiman, Abu-Belal and Abu-Obaiduellah—and five other ringleaders of Gulbuddin's extremist group—Khawaja Rahim, Mohammad Yusuf, Khan Mohammad, Nanzar Mohammad, and Habiborahman—were injured. As a result of the blows a number of warmonger extremists' positions and heavy weapons were also destroyed.

Resistance Says Khowst Recapture 'Impossible'

BK0904111591 Hong Kong AFP in English 1021 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Islamabad, April 9 (AFP)—The Afghan resistance scoffed Tuesday at President Najibullah's order to his troops to prepare for regaining control of Khowst, calling his battle cry nothing more than a joke. The recapture of Khowst, an eastern garrison city lost to the mujahidin guerrillas on March 31 after 18 days of bloody battle, will be "a mission impossible" for the Afghan army, said Najibullah Lafraie, information minister for the resistance's government in exile.

"If they opt for an offensive it will be sheer madness," he said. President Najibullah told top army commanders and Defence Ministry officials Monday that the army would be victorious, Radio Kabul said.

"We will not only regain Khowst but foil any thrust on other fronts also," the radio, monitored here, quoted him as saying. "Be ready for new responsibilities," he said.

Intermittent aerial bombing and Scud missile attacks on the mujahidin were continuing in Khowst, while the state-run BAKHTAR NEWS AGENCY claimed Tuesday that 4,000 Pakistani troops participated in the battle for the city. General Hameed Gul, a Pakistani corps commander and former chief of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) also visited Khowst, BAKHTAR said, renewing allegations already denied by Islamabad that ISI had supervised the guerrilla operation.

Mr. Lafraie said the recapture of Khowst would be very difficult for the regime forces. "The Afghan ruler is trying to boost the sinking morale of his army as the Khowst war has shattered his dream" of knocking out the resistance, he said.

The garrison city is located in eastern Paktia, the home province of Mr. Najibullah and other leading Watan party leaders. Mr. Lafraie said Kabul troops could launch a ground attack by using Gardez, 70 kilometers (43 miles) away, as staging point. But the Khowst-Gardez road is already besieged by mujahidin positioned in the mountains, "who can easily interdict any convoy movement," he said.

Fundamentalist leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, whose Hezb-e-Eslami faction was also reported active in the area, said the seizure of Khowst has triggered "a chain of events that would lead to the crumbling down of the Najibullah regime."

In an interview tuesday with the English-language daily THE NEWS, Mr. Hekmatyar, whose party is considered among the better organised of seven Pakistan-based resistance factions, urged the mujahidin groups to pool their resources to attack Kabul rather than attempting lesser targets.

"The loss of Khowst has unnerved the Kabul regime which is now facing a plethora of problems," he said. "We should exploit this opportunity by mounting one big push" towards the Afghan capital.

Bangladesh

Prime Minister Says Prison Unrest Under Control

BK0904160091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1511 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Dhaka, April 9 (AFP)—Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia Tuesday said her government was in "full control" of Dhaka's high security jail, where one person was killed during a jail break Monday [8 April]. She announced that a judicial commission had been set up to investigate the jail break, during which 13 prisoners escaped and 12 prisoners and jail staff were injured.

In a statement before the parliament, Begum Zia said that two of the escaped prisoners had been recaptured. Begum Zia said that the victim died of the injuries he suffered while trying to escape over a wall, but she did not say whether he had been injured by gunfire from jail guards. Earlier reports quoting jail sources said one prisoner was shot dead and several injured when they tried to escape.

"One escaped inmate was killed and another was being treated at the jail hospital for serious wounds," a prison guard said, adding that prisoners were pushed back into their cells after nearly eight hours of clashes. Begum Zia told parliament police and the paramilitary Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) were called to the jail to search for escaped prisoners.

Among the injured were two deputy jailors, four wardens and six prisoners, she said, adding large quantity of sharp weapons and sticks had been recovered from the prisoners. The 46-year-old premier, whose Bangladesh Nationalist Party won a majority in the parliament in February's elections, heads a 32-member council of ministers under acting President Shahabuddin Ahmed.

Mr. Ahmed succeeded Hussain Mohammad Ershad in December following mass protests. Begum Zia said that during the last days of Mr. Ershad's government, thousands of people were sent to already overcrowded jails. She told parliament more than 5,000 prisoners were detained at the high security jail in Dhaka, which was designed for 2,000.

After Mr. Ershad's ouster, some 1,000 prisoners were freed, she said, adding that many of the prisoners interned by Mr. Ershad "had been nursing the feeling that their detention was illegal." The incidents in Dhaka and other jails were the "outburst of pent-up resentment and demands for their release," she said.

Earlier, officials said at least 12 prisoners had escaped from the jail following an attack on its main gate. A warden was stabbed and several people injured as the prisoners fled with weapons seized from prison staff, sources said. The jail currently holds seven of Mr. Ershad's close associates including former Vice President Moudud Ahmed and Home Minister Mahmudul Hasan.

PRC's Wan Li Congratulates Parliament Speaker

BK0604125691 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Text] Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China Wan Li has congratulated the newly elected speaker of Bangladesh Jatiya Sangsad [parliament] Abdur Rahman Biswas. In a letter to Mr. Biswas, Mr. Wan Li expressed the hope that the friendly relations between the two countries will be further consolidated and developed in the years to come.

Chinese Delegation Arrives for Economic Meeting

BK0704163491 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 7 Apr 91

[Text] A 12-member Chinese delegation led by Vice Minister for foreign economic [relations] and trade, Wang Wendong, arrived in Dhaka today. It will attend the sixth meeting of the China-Bangladesh joint economic commission beginning tomorrow. The meeting will review the progress of bilateral trade and economic relations between the two countries. It will also identify ways of promoting future cooperation in the fields of technical assistance,

expansion of trade and commerce, industrial development, and promotion of joint ventures.

Coastline Pollution Endangers Aquatic Life

BK0604144091 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Text] In Bangladesh, fish and other aquatic species are reported to be on the verge of extinction in the Bay of Bengal along Anwara-Mirersarai coastline of Chittagong because of environmental pollution. A study conducted by environment experts of the Department of Environment revealed that the sea along the coastline is highly polluted for various reasons, including indiscriminate discharge of oils, chemicals, bilge water, garbage, and other rejected substances mainly from ships and industrial units. Mangrove, forests, fish and other sea products are also threatened along the entire coastline of Bangladesh on account of unabated pollution.

India

Kashmir Militants Shoot, Kill Former Legislator

BK0904145091 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Mohammad Subhan Butt, a former National Conference MLA [member of Legislative Assembly], was shot dead by the militants at Tral in Pulwama district today. According to reports, the militants came to his residence and shot him dead.

Senior Civil Official Shot, Killed in Punjab

BK0904130291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] In Punjab, Mr. Hari Om Bhublani, PCS [Punjab Civil Service] officer, was shot dead by two unidentified gunmen in Patiala this afternoon. According to the police, two youths came to the office of Mr. Bhublani and shot at him at a close range, killing him on the spot.

Punjab Militants Kill 18; Police Kill 10 Militants

BK1004041291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] In Punjab, militants struck in village Sevewala in Jaitu area of Faridkot District and shot dead 18 persons and injured another 21 yesterday. According to an official spokesman, the victims were attending a meeting in the local Dharmshala [Hindu hostelry] when six militants came and opened indiscriminate fire. In a similar incident in Bhawanigarh town of Sangrur District, the militants opened fire near a liquor van killing three persons and injuring one last night. Elsewhere, the militants shot dead two persons in Amritsar District and one in Ferozepore District in separate incidents.

Meanwhile, 10 militants, including one hardcore, have been killed in separate encounters with the security forces during the last 24 hours. According to an official spokesman, five militants were killed in a fierce encounter in Bikhiban area of Amritsar District last evening. Four AK-47 rifles and three self loading rifles are among the large quantity of arms and ammunition recovered. In Gurdaspur District, a hardcore militant, Pramjit Singh alias Harish Singh, committed suicide, consuming poison after an hour-long encounter with the security forces yesterday. He was responsible for at least 50 killings. Two militants were killed in Ferozepore District and one each in Bhatinda and Ludhiana Districts in separate encounters.

Attacks on Women by Soldiers in Kashmir Denied

BK0904162891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1335 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] New Delhi, April 9 (AFP)—India denied Tuesday reports of a mass rape by soldiers in Kashmir and said Moslem militants in the northern state had forced local women to make the allegation against the Army to gain sympathy.

The government's chief spokesman said allegations that Army soldiers raped some 50 Moslem women in Kashmir's Kunan-Roshpura village February 24 was totally untrue and seemed to have been "orchestrated by the militants".

Army and civilian investigations have concluded that the women must have been coerced into testifying that each of them had been assaulted between four and 15 times by soldiers during a search operation for militants, he added.

The denial followed complaints by local residents that soldiers attacked and raped 53 women between ages 16 and 60 in Kunan-Roshpura, a sleepy hamlet in the frontier district of Kupwara.

"The investigation did not find a single case of rape... It seems the alleged victims were set up by the militants," the spokesman quoted the findings of a report into the incident as saying.

"Eleven of the alleged victims had reported next day to a local military hospital with regular ailments, but did not confide to the doctors about any sexual assault that occurred (the previous) night," the spokesman told foreign journalists here.

"It is our firm conclusion that the allegations (of rape) against the Army cannot be believed as they were an afterthought and under pressure from the militants," he said.

Initially, local residents complained that only one woman had been raped, but later they raised the figure of the alleged victims to 23, 39 and finally to 53 last month, the spokesman said.

"To sustain these allegations there should have been more than 300 or more security personnel deployed in search operations, but in fact the number was only half of that," he said.

The official also denied allegations widely circulated in the press that the soldiers engaged in the alleged rape were intoxicated.

"Army soldiers on a search or patrol operation do not carry liquor," he said.

Moslem women had complained of a similar mass rape by paramilitary troopers in March 1990 in Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir, but the government has so far neither denied nor confirmed the charge.

A radical Moslem women's organisation, Dukhtarane Millet, last year asked Kashmiri women to carry daggers to defend themselves against would-be rapists.

India troopers are engaged in operations to crush a violent Moslem separatist campaign in Kashmir for the region's secession from India.

Meanwhile in Islamabad, Pakistani legislators voiced anger at alleged Indian "brutalities" in Kashmir.

"The Indian security forces have been violating basic human norms on a gigantic scale," said Minister for Education Fakhar Imam.

Pakistan and India control parts of the disputed territory and have fought two wars over the issue since independence from the British in 1947.

Mr. Imam said Indian forces were torching property, arresting people, plundering their possessions and indulging in "gang rapes."

He reiterated that Indo-Pakistan relations could not be normalized unless the Kashmir dispute was resolved.

India accuses Pakistan of aiding and arming the insurgents in its only Moslem majority state while Islamabad maintains that it only gives political and moral support to "Kashmiri brothers."

Senior Pakistani and Indian officials have just ended talks in New Delhi on bilateral relations.

Prime Minister Proposes Extensive Reforms

BK0904093191 Hong Kong AFP in English 0815 GMT 9 Apr 91

[By Anil Penna]

[Text] New Delhi, April 9 (AFP)—India's caretaker prime minister fired his first salvo in the coming electoral battle, proposing far-reaching political and economic reforms to transfer power to the people and keep pace with a changing world.

Chandra Shekhar unveiled a plan Monday to reorganise India into smaller provinces with greater administrative and fiscal autonomy and to dismantle bureaucratic controls on the domestic economy.

"India is not changing fast enough to keep pace with the rest of the world," the 63-year-old career politician said.

Political parties reacted either cautiously or dismissively to his call for support from "all like-minded people" to what he described as a programme of structural changes essential for India.

"We must evolve a new Indian socio-economic and political order to enable us to...catch up with the rest of the world," he said.

His two-page statement was seen by observers as the virtual election manifesto of his Rodgeling Janata Dal-S (People's Party-Socialist) for the May parliamentary elections.

His emphasis on greater administrative and fiscal autonomy for the states came in the wake of increasing demands from regional politicians for a "truly federal structure," and against the backdrop of a host of separatist movements.

"Now is the time we must display courage and accept the reality of the emerging new trends in the world," he said. "India can earn a distinguished place in the comity of nations only after it has found effective solutions to its problems."

Successive governments have neglected the aspirations of India's underprivileged castes and religious minorities, he said.

"The nation is passing through a period of turbulence because we have ignored these problems," he said. "We have to seek effective, bold and immediate policy alternatives to these problems."

"If at this time we do not display courage to take difficult decisions we shall endanger the unity and integrity of the country," his statement said.

The caretaker premier, however, did not spell out how to achieve greater local autonomy nor did he give details for the geographical reorganisation of India's 25 states into smaller units.

He urged the dismantling of tight bureaucratic controls on the economy to free it from what he called the "inspector raj" and enable small entrepreneurs to flourish, but opposed indiscriminate liberalisation for foreign investors.

Some observers saw the programme as a bid by Mr. Shekhar to trigger a realignment of regional political forces with his party ahead of the May polls, noting that he had been meeting several powerful state figures in recent days.

"This is something that needs debate. We cannot react off the cuff," said Jaipal Reddy, spokesman for the centrist Janata Dal (People's Party). He added it was not proper for a caretaker government to set the national agenda.

Former Premier Rajiv Gandhi's Congress (I) party said Mr. Shekhar's proposals should not be part of an electoral debate.

"What we have to consider is whether a majority of the country will support redrawing the map of India, whether the creation of smaller states leads to something more serious like secessionism," congress spokesman M.J. Akbar said.

"It is a very serious subject which does not have yes/no answers," Mr. Akbar said. "At this moment we don't think it is such a good idea."

The right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) expressed similar fears.

"Mr. Chandra Shekhar's programme is addressed mainly to those regional forces which are on the fringe of secessionism," BJP idealogue Govind Acharya said, citing Sikh separatism in Punjab and a left-wing insurgency in Assam.

"He seems to believe that autonomy is the answer to drawing them back to the national mainstream," he said. "But it could be self-defeating. It could in fact be the catylitic promoter of disintegration unless there are foolproof safeguards."

Communist Party-Marxist Issues Election Manifesto

BK0904164191 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], in its manifesto, promises restructuring of center-state relations, abrogation of Article 356 [of the Constitution—on declaration of president's rule in any state], and introduction of proportional representation in the electoral system. It lays stress on the right to work, status quo of all places of worship, and a negotiated settlement of the Ayodhya temple issue. The 26-point manifesto was released in New Delhi today by the politburo member, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet.

The manifesto says genuine demands of the people will be conceded to solve the problems of Punjab, Kashmir, and Assam and it will be ensured that their identity is protected within the framework of Indian unity. It also favors autonomy for compact, contiguous tribal majority areas within states, check on atrocities against the scheduled castes, tribes, and women, and implementation of the Mandal Commission recommendations for reservation in central services for backward classes.

On the economic front, the CPI-M manifesto calls for reversal of policies to promote self-reliance, cut in imports, increase in direct taxes, check on rising prices and black money. It also promises state trading in food grains and nationalization of jute and textile mills. The party says it stands for implementation of land reforms, distribution of surplus land among the landless, and workers' participation in management. It assures comprehensive central legislation to protect the rights of agricultural workers. Statutory provision for unemployment benefits and one rank, one pension for ex-servicemen are among the other promises. Reiterating its commitment to strengthen democracy, national unity, and social and economic justice, the CPI-M assures judicial reforms to prevent subversion of its independence and also autonomy for the elctronic media.

On foreign policy, the CPI-M says it will strive for improvement of relations with neighbors and give priority to better Sino-Indian ties. It says the party will endeavor to find a solution to the Tamil minority problem in Sri Lanka in accordance with the Indo-Sri Lanka accord. The manifesto says the party favors a nonaligned foreign policy, support to national liberation movements, and establishment of a homeland for the Palestinians.

Poll Chief Denies Reports on Possible Violence

BK0804131891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] The chief election commissioner, Mr. T.N. Sheshan, today denied reports in a section of the press quoting him as saying that he apprehended more violence this time and that the elections may not be free and fair. He told newsmen in New Delhi today that during his visit to Chandigarh yesterday, he heard the points of view of various political parties from Punjab and Haryana. He clarified that the commission has not come to any specific assessment as yet on the law and order situation and on holding the elections in Punjab.

Mahanta Announces Resignation From Party Post

BK0804161891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] The Asom Gana Parishad president, Mr. Prafulla Kumar Mahanta, has resigned from his party post. Announcing this at a news conference in Guwahati today, Mr. Mahanta said he has taken this step in the interest of the party and the state. He said he has handed over the charge to one of the vice presidents of the party Mr. (Dhyaneshwar Bodo) who will now be the acting president till the next convention of the party.

Goa Regional Party To Merge With Congress-I

BK0604100491 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Text] The Maharashtra Gomantak Party, Ravi Naik group, has decided to merge with the Congress-I. The Congress-I high command has approved the proposal. Mr. Shanta Ram Naik, former Goa Pradesh [state] Congress-I president, told our Goa correspondent that the formalities of the merger will be completed next week.

Polluted Water Kills 400 in Central India

BK0804002891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1750 GMT 7 Apr 91

[Text] New Delhi, April 7 (AFP)—Some 400 people have died from epidemics caused by drinking polluted water in a central Indian region inhabited mostly by tribespeople, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said Sunday.

Shitla Sahai, water resources minister in Madhya Pradesh state, was quoted as saying that the dead were all tribespeople living in that state's remote Bastar District.

He said the deaths occurred in the past two months and included gastroenteritis and cerebral infections.

The minister, returning from a tour of the affected region, said that steps taken by the public health department had improved the situation and there had been no deaths reported in the last 45 days.

Negotiated Solution to Ethnic Tangle Urged

BK0904145291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1430 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] India has impressed upon Sri Lanka the need for a negotiated political solution to the ethnic problem in the island. This was conveyed to the Sri Lankan foreign secretary, Mr. Bernard Tilakaratne, who met the deputy minister for external affairs, Mr. Digvijay Singh, in New Delhi today. Mr. Singh also expressed the hope that conditions will be created in Sri Lanka for the early return of the refugees stranded in India. The two sides expressed the desire to make the Indo-Sri Lankan joint commission an effective forum for wide-ranging bilateral cooperation.

Three-Day Official Talks With Sri Lanka Reported

BK0804130891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 8 Apr 91

[Text] The three-day Indo-Sri Lankan official-level talks began in New Delhi today. The two sides will prepare for the first meeting of the Indo-Sri Lankan joint commission, which is expected to be held in New Delhi later this year.

The Indian side to the talks is led by the foreign secretary Mr. Muchkund Dubey, while the Sri Lankan foreign secretary, Mr. Bernard Tilakaratne, is heading his country's delegation. The two foreign secretaries will also review the entire gamut of bilateral relations and identify areas of further cooperation.

Joint Commission Agreement Finalized

BK1004154891 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] India and Sri Lanka have finalized a draft agreement to set up a joint commission. This was stated in a joint press release issued at the end of the three-day official level talks between the delegations of the two countries in New Delhi today. The document will be signed at the first session of the joint commission likely to be held in India before the end of the current year.

Pakistan Charge of Interference in Sindh Denied

BK1004160691 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] India has described the Pakistan's charge of interference in Sindh as baseless. The spokesman of the External Affairs Ministry said in New Delhi that it is indeed an attempt by Pakistan to draw the attention away from the real interference which is being taking place with its moral and material support to terrorists operating from the Pakistan territory in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. The spokesman was reacting to the remarks made by the Pakistan foreign secretary, Mr. Shaharyar Khan, on his return from India.

Visiting Soviet General Meets Military Officials

BK0604064691 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1600 GMT 4 Apr 91

[Text] The deputy defense minister and commander of the Soviet air forces, General Shaposhnikov, who is on a seven-day goodwill visit to India, today called on Air Chief Marshal S.K. Mehra in New Delhi. They discussed matters of mutual interest. [video shows Indian air force chief meeting with Shaposhnikov]

The Soviet general also called on the minister of state for defense, Mr. Lalit Vijay Singh, and the chief of army staff, General S.F. Rodriguez.

Hungarian President Arrives in New Delhi

BK1004091291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0730 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] The Hungarian president, Mr. Arpad Goncz, arrived in New Delhi today on a six-day state visit to India. The president, Mr. R. Venkataraman; the prime minister, Chandra Shekhar, and his cabinet colleagues received him at Rashtrapati Bhavan [President's House] where he was given an interservices guard of honor. Speaking to newsmen, the Hungarian president said that India is a great country which he had long cherished to visit.

During his stay in the capital, Mr. Goncz will have wide ranging talks with the Indian leaders.

Agreements Signed

BK1004161291 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] India and Hungary today signed three agreements in the fields of health, culture, and cooperation between the radio organizations of the two countries. The agreements were signed after an hour and half long talks between the two delegations in New Delhi today.

The Hungarian president, Mr. Arpad Goncz, and the prime minister, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, were present on the occasion. The secretary, Health, Mr. R.N. Mishra; additional secretary, Culture, Mr. S.K. Mahapatra; and director general of All India radio, Mr. A.R. Shinde, signed the agreements on behalf of India.

Mr. Chandra Shekhar and Mr. Goncz agreed to send experts to examine specific areas of economic cooperation between the two countries. During the talks the Hungarian president gave a lucid account of dramatic developments that are taking place in his country's economy. Referring to the excellent relations between the two countries, he said Hungary is keen to participate in developing power plants in India. The prime minister assured the Hungarian president of India's full cooperation in his country's efforts toward easing tension in areas critical to world peace.

Ex-Afghan Official Calls Imprisonment 'Illegal'

BK1004094291 Hong Kong AFP in English 0912 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] New Delhi, April 10 (AFP)—A former Afghan deputy prime minister implicated in a failed coup against the Kabul regime has been languishing in an Indian prison for nearly a year, a newspaper said Wednesday.

Indian officials confirmed THE TIMES OF INDIA report that Assadullah Sarwari was being held in New Delhi's

maximum-security Tihar jail after his arrest in June 1990 for non-possession of a passport and visa.

Mr. Sarwari was deputy prime minister while Babrak Karmal was president of Afghanistan. Differences with Mr. Karmal led to his posting as ambassador to Mongolia from 1980 to 1988.

President Najibullah then appointed him as ambassador to Yemen, where he served a year. He was named as one of the conspirators in the abortive March 1990 coup attempt by Mr. Najibullah's defence Minister Shahnawaz Tanai.

He was arrested on June 11, 1990 by Indian authorities during a visit to New Delhi by Afghan Foreign Minister Abdul Wakil.

Mr. Sarwari told THE TIMES OF INDIA that his "illegal detention" was part of a "political vendetta."

"President Najib regards me as as his main political opponent and knows that if I return to Afghanistan, I will defeat him in the party elections," he was quoted as saying Tuesday before an inconclusive court hearing.

He came to India on January 16, 1990. He claimed his passport and other documents were seized by an Afghan Embassy official minutes before he was due to fly from here to Kabul on February 2, 1990.

There was no explanation for the lapse of time between the alleged seizure of his documents and his eventual arrest.

His lawyer produced copies of the passenger manifest and the register at a New Delhi guest house which contained details of his passport along with an entry that he had an India visa for six months, THE TIMES OF INDIA said.

Alok Verma, an official at the foreigners regional registration office which filed charges against Mr. Sarwari, declined to comment.

"The case is in court and it would be improper for me to comment on a subject that is sub-judice," he said by telephone.

The Afghan Embassy here and the Indian Foreign Ministry had no immediate comment.

Mr. Sarwari told the newspaper that he had been lodged in a "C" class cell at Tihar jail along with "petty criminals and smugglers." He said he had been produced in court in chains until February.

He said he had written to Indian Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar requesting asylum but had received no response, calling the treatment meted out by New Delhi "a shame for Indian democracy."

Mr. Sarwari said he had written to the United Nations to intervene on his behalf but the Indian Government refused to allow the U.N. to interview him.

He told THE TIMES he would apply to the London-based human rights group Amnesty International if his case was not disposed of soon.

Staying in India without valid documents carries a maximum punishment of five years' imprisonment and a fine of 50,000 rupees (2,777 U.S. dollars), according to officials at the home ministry.

The minimum sentence is one year in jail and a 10,000 rupee (555 U.S. dollar) fine.

Iran

Velayati Urges International Action on Refugees

LD0904180491 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati, in a meeting this morning with the ambassadors, charges d'affaires, and political representatives of foreign countries stationed in Tehran, stressed the need to pay attention to the appalling condition of the Iraqi refugees and for governments and international organizations to deal with them as quickly as possible. According to our correspondent's report, the foreign minister told the meeting that what is happening in Iraq today is a great disaster for the Iraqi nation. He said: This disaster, in addition to the slaughter of the innocent Iraqi people, has turned into a huge mass exodus and flight.

He added: The Islamic Republic of Iran calls on your governments and all the international organizations responsible for human problems and the fate of the tyrannized people of Iraq to put into practice their humanitarian promises in dealing with the conditions of the Iraqi refugees who have entered Iran. Mr. Velayati said that any delay in sending relief to defenseless Iraqi refugees will carry with it the responsibility of increasing the number of victims. He added: We expect the international community, governments, and those organizations which raise the issue of human rights to take action within their own legal and international responsibilities—and rest assured that they will have the complete and serious participation of the Islamic Republic of Iran in this humanitarian issue. The foreign minister added: The international community's blind eye to what goes on today in Iraq, beside bringing devastating losses to the tyrannized people of Iraq, is contrary to any idea of bringing about peace and stability to the region and the world.

Mr. Velayati pointed out during the meeting that the responsibility of what happens in Iraq today rests with the Iraqi Government, but its adverse effects and consequences are imposed on the Islamic Republic. He added: The Islamic Republic of Iran, despite the problems and hardships resulting from the recent earthquake in our country, on the basis of commitment to Islamic and moral principles, has entered the arena with all her resources far beyond her legal and international responsibilities and is hosting more than 760,000 Iraqi refugees whose numbers are increasing every moment.

Calls for UN Action in Iraq

PM1004152091 London BBC Television Network in English 2130 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by correspondent Jeremy Paxman in London on 9 April; from the "Newsnight" program—recorded]

[Text] [Paxman] I asked Velayati whether he was concerned about the plan to create a safe haven for the Kurds.

[Velayati] As I said, it's still not very clear to us. We don't have details; we haven't received any details about this proposal. We have only heard something about that, but still it's too vague. Of course, all of us agree that Iraq should remain as an independent country with preservation of its integrity and total sovereignty.

[Paxman] Do you take the view that the Kurds were, in a sense, led on by the coalition and then abandoned?

[Velayati] I think that's true. I said to some reporters a few days ago that it's too late. During those days that these people were badly bombarded with the Iraqi planes, no country in the world—at least no Western country—dealt with these questions properly during those days. Iraq maybe received some green light by some Western countries, at least indirectly, that they can use any kind of weapons—even aircraft and helicopter gunships—against their own people.

[Paxman] What should the rest of the world do, Dr. Velayati?

[Velayati] During those days, Saddam Husayn should not be allowed to use aircraft and helicopter gunships and different kinds of weapons.

[Paxman] So, are you saying we should try to shoot down Iraqi aircraft?

[Velayati] I think that the international organization, the international community, should not allow the government of Iraq to use such huge weapons and different kinds of sophisticated weapons against their own people—which is an international task for all of us.

[Paxman] That would mean military intervention by the United States in Iraq again.

[Velayati] I am talking about the intervention of the international organizations, and specifically I am talking about the United Nations. Under the supervision of the United Nations, all of us have to support the people of Iraq for democracy—if on the basis of the United Nations charter. We have to do something for these people to prevent the Government of Iraq crushing these uprisings for democracy: We have to do that.

[Paxman] As you know, Dr. Velayati, there is a particular problem as regards American assistance to you in dealing with the refugees; and it is to deal with a particular difficulty you have in relations with Washington and to a lesser extent with London—and that is to do with hostages. Now, is there any sign of you being able to achieve anything to secure the release of Western hostages in Lebanon?

[Velayati] We have said several times, since a few years ago, that we are against any hostage taking in Lebanon or any other country. We have tried a lot to help the countries that have hostages in Lebanon. We have been successful to get the release of some of them, but we have failed to continue our efforts, because that was a unilateral effort. From the other side—I mean some Western countries like the United States and Britain which have great influence in Israel and also among the Phalangists in Lebanon—they haven't taken any positive measures on the basis of reciprocity. So we have faced since then—we have faced a real deadlock in this very vital question.

[Paxman] So until there is some sign of pressure from London and Washington on Israel and the Phalangists in Lebanon, we can't expect to see any further releases of Western hostages there?

[Velayati] I think if the United States and Britain use their influence in Israel for getting the release of Lebanese hostages, we would have a new chapter.

Velayati, France's Kouchner Discuss Refugees

LD0904115991 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Bernard Kouchner, French secretary of state for humanitarian action, has met with Foreign Minister Velayati and briefed him on the results of his tour of the region where Iraqi refugees are camped.

According to the Central News Unit, Mr. Kouchner described the state of the refugees as deplorable and said that he had seen countless refugees whose numbers were increasing by the minute. The rate at which they are pouring over the Iraqi border is beyond imagining.

The French deputy prime minister added: These refugees have poured into Iran with empty hands and stomachs, and it is the world's duty to cooperate with Iran in this crucial task.

The same report states that in his reponse, Velayati expressed gratitude for the steps taken by the French Government and expressed the hope that the Iraqi people will be rescued from the problems and hardships they are suffering. He added: The Islamic Republic of Iran has deployed all its resources to assist and provide shelter for the refugees but, unfortunately, the scale of the tragedy is such that no country can cope with the difficulties on its own. All countries and international organizations should take an active part along this humanitarian path.

Mohtashemi Said in Beirut To Relocate Hostages

TA0904121891 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0330 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Informed political sources in Tehran are saying that 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi has traveled to Beirut in order to move the Western hostages in Lebanon to different prisons. These sources stress that in view of the fact that

Mohtashemi opposes the release of Western hostages being held by the Lebanese Hizballah, his visit to Beirut acquires special significance.

Iraqi Refugee Reports Atrocities by Mojahedin

LD0904105591 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] According to IRNA, an Iraqi Kurdish refugee who recently sought refuge in Iran after crossing the border at Marivan disclosed that the Monafeqin [hypocrites, term used to describe the Mojahedin-e Khalq organization] were cooperating with the Iraqi regime. He said: On arriving at the northern cities of Iraq the Monafeqin tied children and young people together in several groups and drove tanks over them.

Papers View 'Safe Haven' Proposal as 'Plot'

LD1004100391 Tehran IRNA in English 0847 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Tehran, April 10, IRNA—Two morning papers, the Persian daily 'ABRAR' and the English daily 'TEHRAN TIMES' Wednesday editorialized on the proposal for a safe haven for the Iraqi Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq, condemning the move and describing it as a plot.

"The plan for creating a 'safe haven' in northern Iraq is a new phenomenon which smells of a political plot to change the political geography of the region," wrote the Peresian daily ABRAR.

British Prime Minister John Major has put forward the proposal at a time when most Western countries are trying to avoid sending relief aid to Iran to help ease the suffering of hundreds of thousands of the tyrannized Iraqis who are fleeing to Iran.

Presence of at least 800,000 refugees in Iran and many more behind the border necessitates an all-out international drive for aid. However, "so far no effective aid to meet the vital needs of the refugees has been forthcoming from the international bodies and especially countries which always talk about 'human rights' and insist on respecting these rights," wrote ABRAR.

Iran has been calling for international aid to cope with the influx of the refugees. "However, the so-called defenders of human rights are after another plot against the Kurds."

The British proposal to set up a 'safe haven' for Kurds has been considered by observers as the beginning of creation of a government. The move is a "prelude to a plot which Britain has had in mind for years," wrote ABRAR.

In a second commentary on the controversial proposal on setting up a safe haven for the Iraqi Kurds ABRAR wrote that in international law there is no mention of such a concept. "How this safe haven is going to be established and by whom is a question that has not been addressed."

The British-sponsored proposal for creating a safe haven, which has gained support of some permament members of the United Nations Security Council and the European Community, "is nothing but dividing booties of an unholy war. If this plan is carried out, once again the security of the Middle East will face a severe threat."

The Iraqi Kurdish people in their plight have never favoured disintegration of Iraq, concluded ABRAR.

TEHRAN TIMES warned that "one has to be cautious about moves that aim to make political changes within Iraq."

It said that the Iraqi people will no doubt welcome the toppling of the ruling Ba'thist regime. "But the British proposal must be examined very closely in this light, to ensure that political change does not later pave the way for a geo-political change in the structure of that country leading to total disintegration of Iraq."

It reiterated, "Any measures to support the afflicted Iraqi people including Kurds and Arabs enjoy the fullest backing of the Islamic Republic of Iran in keeping with its oft-stated humanitarian and Islamic stances in all such matters.

Yet, TEHRAN TIMES concluded, "It is but right that the Islamic Republic of Iran at the same time, stands fast against any moves that in the long-run may change the geo-political map of this country (Iraq) or the region."

Government Said Merging Anti-Saddam Forces

TA0904125591 (Clandestine) Iran's Flag of Freedom Radio in Persian 0330 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] A report from Tehran indicates that the Islamic Republic intends to activate further the opponents of Saddam Husayn's regime residing in Iran. According to this report, after obtaining Hashemi-Rafsanjani's consent, Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim and Jalal Talebani met in Paveh and reviewed a plan for merging the anti-Saddam forces. At the order of Khamene'i, 75 million tumans have been placed at the disposal of Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim as a partial payment aimed at implementing this plan against the Iraqi regime.

Daily Sees No Need for U.S. Presence in Gulf

NC0504183391 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 28 Mar 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Security in P. Gulf Has No Need for U.S. Help"]

[Text] A U.S. daily has recently disclosed that the Pentagon and Bahrain have approached an all-out agreement for the establishment of a permanent military base and command of the central operations of the joint U.S.-Bahraini forces. NEW YORK TIMES, in its Monday issue, wrote that transfer of the headquarters of the central operations of U.S. forces from its present venue in Florida to the Persian Gulf region, has been one of the major objectives Pentagon has been awaiting for long.

Although U.S. official sources have not yet commented on their plan on how to stay in the Persian Gulf, evidences are available that the White House leaders are determined to take maximum advantage of their military victory over

Iraq in order to materialize their hegemonist objectives. To this end, they exert utmost effort to gain such a goal without having any rival.

At the time of their military attack against Iraq, the Americans were forced to show that they embarked on such an action together with the international community and in line with resolutions of the UN Security Council and would make shuttle trips in order to preserve unity of the West in following their policies. But now, when there are talks over the establishment of a military base, the Americans have forgotten their allies and in order to prove that the U.S. is the "sole police" of the world, they reject cooperation with any forces.

The Americans know well that nothing in the Middle East would be stable for a long time and that present military victory of the U.S. against Iraq would not necessarily entail political victory as well. In fact, no power in the world could establish true security in the Persian Gulf region in the absence of cooperation of the regional states.

If the Americans intend to establish permanent bases in the Persian Gulf, this right would be reserved for other world powers such as Soviet Union, France, India etc and also regional powers to have a military presence in this region. In this event, the region would be turned into a zone for military rivalry and the only thing which could not be experienced in this part of the world would be "security and stability." At present seven countries out of the eight Persian Gulf states, that is Iran, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Bahrain have no dispute with each other over the establishment of security in the region. This is something that should be well marked.

It is only Iraq which might disturb security in this region. Given the ambiguous status quo in Iraq, and with regard to the fact that the ongoing popular uprising in Iraq would become victorious, for which there are strong hopes, there would be no need for a military presence of any foreign power in the Persian Gulf region.

Continuing Comment on Developments in Iraq

West 'Ignoring' Human Rights

LD0904194691 Tehran IRNA in English 1748 GMT 9 Apr 91

[How Washington and London Deal With Human Rights in Iraq, by Hamid Houshangi]

[Text] London, April 9, IRNA—Six weeks after the conclusion of the war between the allies and Iraq, which resulted in the defeat of the Ba'thist army, the situation of the Iraqi people is deteriorating on an historically unprecedented scale.

One sixth of the Iraqi territory is under allied occupation and the Ba'thist regime remains in power in Baghdad. The Shi'as of the south of Iraq, with U.S. consent, have been ruthlessly suppressed and the Kurds—after gaining control of northern Iraq for a week—have been attacked mercilessly from the air and from the ground by forces loyal to Saddam Husayn.

This has forced the Iraqi Kurds to flee from their towns and homes towards Iran and Turkey. Over a million Iraqi Kurds and Shi'as have poured into those two countries over the past three weeks and in Iran alone, by Monday afternoon, 800,000 such refugees had arrived.

There appears to be no end in sight to the flow of Iraqi refugees heading towards Iran, which is already acting host to 2 million Afghan and nearly 100,000 Kuwaiti refugees who had sought sanctuary there over the past decade, with the Kuwaitis arriving in the past 8 months. In fact, Iran currently has the largest number of refugees, compared with any other country in the world.

Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, the leader of the Islamic revolution, called on the Iranian people Saturday, to mobilize all their resources to assist their Iraqi brethren. This plea was repeated by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani on Sunday. The Iranian people have rushed to the aid of the Kurdish and Shi'a brethren with selfless generosity. Truckloads of medicines, food, blankets and other aid, have been rushed to the refugees, according to incoming reports.

Furthermore, Iranian Government officials have set up many new camps throughout the southern and western border sectors to house the mounting numbers of Iraqi refugees.

After an 8-year war with Iraq, during which Iran's economy was severely damaged, it is natural for the Islamic Republic to be unable to cope with the social and economic difficulties concomittant upon the influx of more than 1.5 million refugees onto its territory.

The current unfortunate situation of the Iraqi people is a product of the inhumane policies of Baghdad, Washington and London. Yet the West shamelessly claims to be an upholder of human rights and accuses its political enemies, such as Iran, of being in breach of the conventions governing those rights.

One can easily recall that George Bush, the U.S. President, invited the Iraqi people to rise up against their ruler. However, with the upsurge of the struggle in the south of Iraq, carried out by the predominantly Shi'a Iraqis, Bush decided to stand back idly and effectively grant Saddam a free hand in crushing the popular revolt.

Saddam's forces subsequently did so with the use of napalm and phosporous bombs, artillery, tanks and helicopter gunships, leading to untold numbers of dead and injured among Iraq's civilian population.

The popular uprising in Iraq, called for by Bush, was being crushed under the watchful observation of British and American forces stationed very close by. A simple objection to Saddam by Bush, about the use of helicopters, tanks and planes, under the terms of temporary ceasefire, was followed up only by the shooting down of two Iraqi fixed wing jets over Tikrit. If the objection had been stronger, or the action been wider, the way may have been paved for

the Iraqi people to overthrow Saddam and for first time the Iraqi people could determine their own fate.

The same indifference was shown towards the uprising of the Kurds in northern Iraq, leading to the deaths of untold numbers, the destruction of their homes and cities and the massive influx of Kurdish refugees to Iran and Turkey. Once again the West, this alleged upholder of human rights, did nothing.

The West in general, and the U.S. and UK in particular, under pressure from world public opinion, have now started dispatching limited aid and material for the Iraqi refugees. But this aid is mostly intended for the Kurdish refugees who have headed towards Turkey. The plight of Kurds in Iran is being partially ignored, which seems to indicate that the West intends to heighten the long- term social and economic tensions in the Islamic Republic while Iran is burdened with a larger number of Iraqi refugees.

It should be remembered that the Iraqi regime, which invaded Kuwait on 2nd August 1990, was the same regime which launched an eight and a half year war of aggression against Iran on 21st September 1980. The only notable difference concerns the change in Western policy during the two crises. In the first one the victim was Iran, which was an American enemy, and in the second one, Kuwait, a friend of the West was occoupied by the Iraqi Army.

Saddam, after the invasion of Kuwait, was the same person as during his equally barbarous war against Iran, who had received large scale western military, political and financial assistance. The killing of Iranian civilians by Iraqi missile attacks against Iranian towns, plus the use of chemical weapons by Iraq during that war, against both Iranians and Iraqi Kurds, were all completely ignored by the West at the time.

The West was so generous in its policy of human rights towards Iraq, during the Persian Gulf War, that the Baghdad regime was erased from the U.S. State Department's so-called list of those sponsoring terrorism, and the West did not even condemn once the Iraqi policies verbally, during the war with Iran.

It must also be noted that Britain, for apparent humanitarian concerns, is insisting upon Iran to receive more and more of the Kurdish refugees, without dispatching any aid to Iran so far, to cope with such a large influx of people. And it should not be forgotten that it was Britain which was unwilling to accept fewer than 100 Iraqi Kurdish refugees in England, just a few months ago.

A group of Iraqi Kurdish refugees entered Britain and applied for political assylum, but under instructions from the Home Office in London, were all imprisoned and then ordered to be deported as illegal immigrants. In protest at the deportation order, one of the Kurds set himself alight and died of serious burns. But even that incident failed to alter the policy of the human rights lovers within the British Government and of course 'Amnesty International' said nothing.

There is no doubt that by depopulating the Iraqi towns and cities of people, especially since they are his opponents, Saddam intends to consolidate his internal power position inside Iraq. It is natural that Iran, on the basis of its Islamic principles, will accept the Iraqi refugees, but it must not assist Saddam's plot by permitting the Iraqis to remain permanently on its territory.

The West is ignoring the human rights of the Iraqi people, particularly the Shi'as, and by insidious means is trying to ensure the continuation of Saddam's rule, at whatever cost. Another option is a Sunni dominated military-Ba'thist coup which will remove Saddam but keep the current status quo in political terms in Baghdad, which would also balance Iran's power in the region, regardless of human rights considerations.

Contrary to Western claims that it believes in non-interference in Iraq's internal affairs, the implementation of this policy, which U.S. officials talk about in public, is the most flagrant example of intervention in the internal affairs of another country. Past records of American policy in Vietnam, Grenada and most recently Panama show how much respect the U.S. has for the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other countries.

The Iraqi rebels, who were tricked by the West into rising up against Saddam's regime before they were fully prepared, paid dearly for doing so, many with their lives. Many more have now been forced to leave their country altogether.

The West's treachery becomes evident when one remembers that according to the UN Charter, genocide is unlawful and must be acted against, and that genocide is defined as an attempt to eradicate an entire ethnic or religious group.

The West has chosen to ignore the UN Charter on genocide now, whereas during the Kuwait crisis, the U.S. and its allies made full use of the UN machinery to give its policies against Iraq a legal justification.

Most recently, the West's alleged concern for human rights has led London (which as the result of its policy made one Kurdish refugee to set fire to himself at Heathrow just a few months ago) to seek a 'safe haven' or an 'enclave' for Iraqi Kurds. This Western generosity, however, will not cover the Shi'a populated part of Iraq and it is not clear whether this enclave would be dismantled after Saddam's downfall.

Many Muslims believe that the West in order to compensate for its contradictory and deceitful policies towards Iraq, should now start assisting the Iraqi refugees genuinely, irrespective of their ethnic origins—Kurds or Arabs—or religious affiliations—Shi'a or Sunni.

Moreover, the West must show additional concern towards the Iraqi refugees in Iran, who number around a million. The genocide and crimes of the Iraqi Ba'thist regime must be stopped at once and the UN charter must be acted upon not only for Iraqi Kurds but for everybody in Iraq.

The West should press Baghdad for the return of all Iraqi refugees to their homes in the south and north of their

country, with their safety guaranteed. And the West is also under obligation to create the necessary conditions for the Iraqi people to chose their own government and to live in peace and harmony with their neighbours.

The Muslims believe that it is only after the implementation of the above-mentioned steps, that the West will be able to claim that it makes no distinction when dealing with human rights in Europe or America, and human rights in the Middle East and the Third World. This, however, appears to be very difficult for the West to achieve.

West Allows Iraq To Crush Unrest

LD0904130191 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1109 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The 12 EC leaders at an emergency summit yesterday reviewed Iraq's internal situation and the refugee problem. The most important item on the agenda of this summit was Britain's proposal to create a sanctuary under UN auspices. France declared its support for this proposal, but the United States, in a cautious response, refrained from expressing a hasty opinion on Britain's proposal.

An interesting point following the end of the coalition war with Iraq is the attempt by the European states to assume a more active role regarding internal developments in Iraq. These countries have so far failed to direct events of the Persian Gulf crisis in a manner they desire, either because the EC lacks a united army that could back its political moves, or suffers from a division of opinion among its major members. Ultimately they had to go along with U.S. policies.

The issue of human rights violations in Iraq—which Europe is raising now—is nothing new. The oppressed people of Iraq have witnessed forced migration and the crushing of their uprising many times before. The chemical bombing of the innocent people of Halabjah seems no less horrific than the present desperate plight of the Iraqi people. Therefore, one should look not at humanitarian sentiments but elsewhere for the cause of the West European states' sudden sensitivity toward Iraq. Political experts believe that Europe is concerned by the strengthening of the United States' global role as their future rival. This concern has even spread to America's closest ally in the EC, Britain; for after termination of the Persian Gulf crisis, Britain has become particularly close to France and Germany on the Iraqi and the Middle East situation.

Political analysts believe that although under the existing circumstances the West is not exerting any pressure to topple Saddam and his Ba'th Party, this does not mean the West favors the continuation of his rule. In the opinion of these analysts, the West will allow the present regime to rule until he finishes the job of crushing the Islamic and ethnic uprising. The regime is then expected to fall automatically after completing its mission. This is because a regime that has no popular support at home and receives no support from abroad will have no destiny but collapse.

'Will Never Tolerate' Iraq Breakup

NC0704121391 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 28 Mar 91 p 9

[Unattributed commentary: "Who Is Entertaining Thoughts of Iraq's Dismemberment?"]

[Text] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Certain Westerners, including French and British officials, recently made some extremely noteworthy overt remarks about the dismemberment of Iraq. They expressed support for Iraq's disintegration to end the crisis, and the head of the British Parliament's foreign affairs committee clearly stated: "The unrest in Iraq must end, even at the expense of the division of the country."

The plot to dismember Iraq is worth assessing for various reasons. The consequences of such a development will affect the neighboring countries as well as the people of Iraq. In addition, most of the consequences of a partition of Iraq should be seen within the framework of the illicit interests of world arrogance.

The people of Iraq would most certainly suffer the greatest harm from such plots, as the dismemberment of Iraq means that centers of tension would be created in various parts of the country and generate concomitant trends toward absolute dependence. In such a situation, not only would the people not be able to control their destinies, but they will also become very weak and vulnerable. Internecine strife would erupt and tranquillity would not return to the country for a long time. This is well understood by the Iraqi people and will be forcefully confronted by them.

Neighboring countries will also not welcome such a development and will consider it a danger to their own security. In fact, the breakup of Iraq would deal a blow to the national security of other countries and would not be tolerated by any neighboring country. In fact, the dismemberment of Iraq would not even benefit Turkey, which has propounded the theory of the "Federative State of Iraq." If such a step would result in the better administration of a state, then Turkey itself has more pressing reasons for becoming federated.

We observe, however, that those who are prescribing a "federative" system and deem it as the first step toward Iraq's democratization themselves refrain from adopting the same course in their own countries. Turkey has also rejected the dismemberment of Iraq. In any case, the regional countries and Iraq's neighbors in particular will never tolerate the breakup of Iraq and will display an appropriate reaction to it.

Why then do some countries, including Britain, support Iraq's breakup? Is it not because this plot is to the detriment of the people of Iraq and the regional countries?

Those who support Iraq's breakup are definitely aware of the sensitivity of the people and the region, but their illicit interests demand that if possible, weaker countries should be divided into smaller segments so that it is easier to dominate them.

The dubious developments taking place in the area under the occupation of the allied forces in southern Iraq, including their recent unjustifiable actions, raises the possibility that it is probably that under these special circumstances that "the seed of Iraq's dismemberment" may germinate in this region. As the Iraqi regime is in a weak position, the regime itself, in an attempt to stay alive, may consent to its breakup by giving up perhaps a small segment of territory, and will thus bring this plot closer to fruition.

In the past few years, the Iraqi regime has shown that it is ready to accept any plan to keep itself in power. The allies, and the supporters of Iraq's dismemberment in particular, should know that they are not pitched against the Iraqi regime, but against the people of Iraq and all regional countries. These people will fiercely confront such a conspiracy and prevent its materialization.

Iraqi Cabinet Reshuffle Viewed

NC060414349l Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 26 Mar 91 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "The Shifting of Pawns in Baghdad Is a Futile Attempt"]

[Text] Many complicated incidents have overshadowed current and future incidents in Iraq. What happened yesterday [as published; Iraqi cabinet change was announced on 23 March] was very unexpected. What is happening today could not have been foreseen by the Baghdad rulers yesterday, and what will happen tomorrow may be contrary to all expectations.

This is precisely the reason that Saddam's only thought is to "stay in power at any price." To achieve this objective he resorts to any measure possible. On one hand he pays "homage" to America and its allies and accepts all of their conditions, even to the extent of fully surrendering; on the other hand he resorts to belligerence vis-a-vis the Iraqi people. But the Baghdad regime realized very soon that the raging wave of popular uprising is much stronger than it originally thought and that it can quell it only by resorting to massacres and crimes.

The shifting of pawns in Baghdad proves that this is what the leadership cadre in Baghdad thinks. It shows that they not only think they can only speak the "language of bullets" to the daily increasing number of raging people, but that they should "tacitly accept" past mistakes by promising democracy and trying to divide the people's tightened ranks. This is exactly what Baghdad is doing, and whether the regime keeps power or not will depend on how successful it will be in this effort.

The installation of a new cabinet in Baghdad is a sly move on which Baghdad wants to capitalize. Saddam has resigned from his position as prime minister and has tried to adjust, to a certain extent, a situation where power was concentrated in the hands of one person. Moreover, he has tried to give the military a smaller role, at the same time introducing Shiites into the cabinet with the hope that he can fool the Shiites more than the rest.

Removing Tariq 'Aziz from his position as foreign minister is clearly aimed at ending the extensive political controversies with the outside world. Even though he has apparently been granted a more important position, he has nevertheless been turned into the "fifth wheel" on the wagon of Baghdad's rule. Moreover, the removal of the former information minister can mean that Baghdad has set aside and even drawn a line over its past propaganda policy and wants to start a new era.

If the incidents in Iraq were not as complicated as they are, and people were allowed to express their views, these steps by the Baghdad regime could possibly succeed. But today Iraq's fate is being determined in its cities and not in the cement shelters of the Baghdad regime's Revolution Command Council.

Even though the changing of pawns is a sly step that could create a rift in the rebel front, it came so late that none of the Baghdad regime's expectations were fulfilled and it was rejected by the rebels.

This was a passive step by Baghdad with all the characteristics of a "hasty retreat." Saddam is trying to portray the past cabinet as the culprit in all the past shortcomings and mistakes. He actually confessed to bad management by the past government. But Saddam's great problem is that if the past government was unsuccessful in its policies and was defeated, Saddam—as head of that government—was directly responsible for the mistakes and they point a finger directly at him.

The change in government at a time when the popular uprising is continuing in full force proves two points as far as the Baghdad regime is concerned:. First, that Saddam has accepted the views of the opposition that are directly aimed at the Baghdad regime and has been convinced that some individuals should be removed from the government. But at the same time he has slyly tried to sacrifice others for the sake of staying in power himself.

The second point is that with this step Saddam has confessed that the popular uprising has domestic roots and stems from public discontent. With this step he has actually called back his allegation that "the recent movements were carried out and directed by some agitators outside the borders." We draw this conclusion because if this were not the case it would not be logical to change a cabinet for the sake of satisfying agitators beyond the borders.

It seems that Saddam is prepared to show the utmost degree of flexibility in front of the West and the Arabs in order to stay in power. Efforts to savagely suppress the Shi'ites and Islamic activists is among the methods that Saddam is trying to use as a "valuable service" to the West and to regional reaction.

Saddam has felt that the more harshly he acts against the Shi'ites and Islamic activists, the more chances of succeeding he will have. It was precisely from this angle that Saddam was able to silence the West's cries for his overthrow and to even turn American enmity into "tacit support" and to receive authorization from America for the massacre of Shi'ites by using combat helicopters.

Saddam also carried out artillery attacks on the holy shrines of the imams, peace be upon them, precisely in order to prove his hostility toward the Shiites and their sanctities and to make the West happy. The fact that the Baghdad regime is involved in a conflict with the people and is resorting to crimes against them is nothing new given the history of the past 22 years. Nevertheless, until now these conflicts had never spread inside the holy shrines and these shrines were never shelled.

Up to now Saddam has repeatedly shown that he is well aware of how to satisfy the West. But this time he has chosen a method which guarantees his annihilation. Attacking the shrines of the imams, peace be upon them, was actually Saddam's last shot. This is not something that the Muslims, the Shiites especially, can tolerate. The Baghdad regime was unable to achieve anything even when they resorted to demagogy and to "contrived interviews" because what the people are seeing for themselves is completely different from what the Baghdad regime's propaganda machinery is disseminating. Saddam has no way to succeed. This may be regrettable for the West and even more regrettable for the Baghdad rulers, but they have no other alternative but to accept such regrettable realities.

Iraqi Civil Strife Analyzed

NC0504195391 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 27 Mar 91 p 2

[Political commentary by Abolqasem Qasemzadeh: "Civil War in Iraq"]

[Excerpts] The liberation battle by the people of Iraq against Ba'thist rule and Saddam continues in the cities of that country. A reshuffle in the Ba'thist cabinet with various changes in cabinet members and propaganda maneuvers by Saddam to remove the present impasse have not made any difference to the hopeless and abject situation of the Iraqi ruling party. Even now, U.S. forces are stationed 200 km inside Iraq near the Kuwaiti and Saudi borders. [passage omitted]

In such circumstances as these, George Bush and his allies are involved in politico-military games with the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, in particular with Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. The West, spearheaded by the United States, sits by while all this agitation and ferment goes on and watches the bloody civil strife in Iraq.

On the one hand, they do not attach any importance to the killing of resisting Islamic forces or non-Muslim groups by Saddam's Republican Guards, because in different and more propitious circumstances the same forces would be considered a danger to Western interests in the region, especially in Iraq, where the popular forces would be considered revolutionaries.

Among the forces that have risen up against Saddam, Muslim strugglers and Iraqi Shiites with their long-standing combatant record will be considered impediments to U.S. control of the region. Therefore, London and Washington have no qualms about their being killed. On the other hand, in their current estimates they are only counting on a "compromise" with the leaders of some of the movements and their cooperation in the reactionary-American plans in the region. [passage omitted] The term "compromise" is reminiscent of the adage about hiding behind the snake for fear of being swallowed by the dragon, and describes the present infernal conditions raging in the region, from which the Americans are reaping a double benefit. The ruling Ba'th party's and Saddam's psychosis during the eight-year war against the Islamic Revolution, which was the noblest revolutionary movement among Islamic countries, that is, in Iran, and its attack on the most reactionary rulers, namely on the Saudis and the al-Sabahs, constituted the precursor to such a suitable opportunity for the United States.

In the lexicon of the rulers and the domineering United States, the connotations of the terms peace, tranquillity, and security are to forge intra-governmental ties and durable security, and imply that all governments should be on the side of the United States and should cooperate and assist it in taking the oil and in the import of U.S. products to the markets of these countries, with the subsequent export of their capital from the wealthy Persian Gulf region. [passage omitted]

Saddam will resort to anything to retain his position. Tanks and the Republican Guards on the streets of al-Basrah, Karbala', and al-Najaf are firing volleys at the people, and the future of Iraq is faced with a bloody civil war with its miscellaneous concomitant dangers. In the current state of misery and suffering, there is no time to dwell on the inception of the Ba'th Party and its thinking and development in Syria and Iraq to the present day. The historical evolution of this party has two main characteristics, however: the massacre of Muslims and the suppression of Islamic movements, and the creation of a crisis that puts the consequences into the hands of foreigners from both East and West.

Commentary Focuses on Future of Arab Rulers

NC0504201491 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 19 Mar 91 pp 2, 13

[Abolqasem Qasemzadeh commentary: "The Continuation of the Crisis and the Future of Countries"]

[Excerpts] The situation of three countries that played a pivotal role in the war (Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait) continues to be fraught with unrest and turmoil. The war for liberation continues all over Iraqi soil and has encompassed most of the major cities of the country. [passage omitted]

The slogan of a "democratic era" on the part of the U.S. President has generated immense difficulty and anxiety for the tribal governments of the Arab shaykhs in the Persian Gulf region. The opponents of these regimes also see the conditions as conducive for their political maneuverings and in the aftermath of the war, they are demanding changes in the ruling systems of their countries. King Fahd and the Kuwaiti amir are at an impasse which they see no way around.

On the one hand, continuing their past course is not possible without the military presence of the foreign forces, or by a heavily policed militaristic state; and on the other, giving up past habits and bowing to the opinions of the people will only result in the ailing and subsequent demise of these dictatorships.

In view of such a situation, the Gulf Cooperation Council conference in Damascus and the formulation of a resolution to include Syria and Egypt as the politico-security forces with Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other countries within the Gulf Cooperation Council acquires some meaning and credibility. [passage omitted]

This policy will enable Syria and Egypt, which are in the worst economic straits, to breathe a little easier with the petrodollars that will be doled out by Fahd, the Kuwaiti amir, and the Arab shaykhs of the Persian Gulf islands and thus to hide behind a continuing crisis.

The identity of interests of these countries and the United States will link their future and their destinies to the position of the United States and Israel in the region; the idea of resolving the problems of these countries with Israel is nothing more than a game to stall for time on the part of the United States and Israel, and will never materialize. [passage omitted]

The fever of democracy has risen to such an extent that Saddam, in his first long address after the war, promised changes in this regard in the Constitution, giving due respect to the will of the people and the setting up of the Majles in accordance with the wishes of the people of Iraq. It is interesting to note that in this same speech and as a prelude to the future of "democracy" in Iraq, Saddam spoke of the massacre of the people, the suppression of the uprising in Iraqi cities, and the presence of tanks and Republican Guards in major streets and cities of this country as the best sort of success and victory! Such an attitude on the part of Saddam does not come as a surprise to those who have read the annals of the Ba'th Party, and who are acquainted with their policy of acrobatics! [passage omitted]

PLO Position on Mideast Termed 'Big Blunder'

NC0504171791 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 30 Mar 91 p 2

[Editorial: "Sham Efforts by West Only To Help Zionist Regime"]

[Text] Over 300 forces of the Zionist regime launched a helicopter attack against two villages around the city of "Nabulus" over the week-end and after blocking the roads leading to the villages, searched houses of the village dwellers. The Zionists then declared a curfew around Nabulus and exerted further control over the city under the pretext of calling it a military zone.

News dispatches on these two events together with tens of other similar reports, are being received every day indicating that the uprising among Palestinians is taking a wider dimension every day. At the same time, the Zionist regime, has launched a vicious propaganda ploy and is trying to increase its suppression of the Palestinians by abusing the wrong stand the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) adopted during the military occupation of Kuwait by Iraq.

It is unfortunate that the PLO, by taking unjust stands vis-a-vis developments in the Middle East region during the past few years, has made a big blunder. The unilateral stand taken by the PLO, and especially Yasir 'Arafat himself, towards the eight-year long Iraqi imposed war against Iran, and 'Arafat's implicit support of the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, has dealt a fatal blow on the Palestinian uprising.

'Arafat supported a military occupation at a time when his people have been victimized by occupation over the years. But, the world should be vigilant and should not let the high cost of the mistakes by the PLO's leadership be paid by the Palestinian uprising.

Western supporters of the Zionist regime which have resorted to war in order to implement UN Security Council resolutions, should properly now be responsible towards the world public opinion about Resolutions 242 and 338. Yet in a sham effort, they try to pretend to be active finding a solution to the Palestinian cause.

The past history of the Middle East has shown that whenever the West has been put under pressure, it embarks on a series of sham diplomatic efforts but easily forgets it after a short while and continues rendering unsparing help to the Zionist regime and thus encourages it to perpetuate its aggressive policies. In the continuation of its policy of domination over the occupied lands, the Zionist regime is adhering to its old policies to take benefit with the passage of time.

Velayati Meets Afghan Party Officials

LD0604210891 Tehran IRIB Television Network in Persian 1700 GMT 6 Apr 91

[Text] The head and several members of the Central Council of the disbanded Islamic Movement Party of Afghanistan [Hezb-e Harkat-e Eslami-ye Afganistan] met Foreign Minister Velayati today. In the meeting, Mr. Mostafavi, head of the party's Central Council, explained the disbanding of the Islamic Movement Party of Afghanistan and said: Since 13 of the 18 members of the party's Central Council had signed the unity agreement, in view of the articles of the party's constitution, continued activity was not legal and it was decided to officially announce the disbanding of the Islamic Movement Party.

Mr. Velayati then spoke about the many problems of the Muslim nation of Afghanistan and stressed: Every effort must be made to solve those problems, and unity will be the fundamental principle of the Muslim Afghan nation's success. Mr. Velayati added: We will support the Islamic Unity Party of Afghanistan, which is supported by a near-unanimous majority of Afghan Shiites.

Pakistan

Agreement Reached To End National Assembly Boycott

BK0904164491 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] The IJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] and the PDA [People's Democratic Alliance] have reached an agreement to end boycott of the National Assembly by the PDA. The agreement was announced by the leader of the IJI negotiating team, Chaudhary Nissar Ali Khan and Syed Iftikhar Hussain Gilani, MNA [Member of National Assembly] of PDA at a joint session and conference in Islamabad this afternoon.

Under the agreement, a committee comprising three MNA's from each side will be formed to investigate the PDA charges. Another committee will be set up to study the privileges and practices that obtain in other parliamentary democracies and in our parliament regarding the attendance of the members who are party to any legal proceedings in any court of law during the sessions of parliament or any parliamentary committee.

The committee whose terms of reference would be to propose legislation with a view to ensuring attendance of such members in the procedures of the house or its committee would submit its report to the next session of the parliament.

Gunmen Attack Sindh Province Minister's Home

BK1004012691 Hong Kong AFP in English 2152 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Karachi, April 9 (AFP)—Gunmen attacked the residence of a provincial minister Tuesday, killing his bodyguard and injuring his private secretary before escaping, officials said.

Citing witnesses, the officials said the gunmen fired from a car on the vehicle of Tariq Javed, Sindh Province minister for local bodies, at his residence in Gulshan Iqbal.

Mr. Javed's bodyguard, who was sitting in the car, was killed instantly, they said.

The assailants later abandoned their car in a nearby locality, they said, adding that police were investigating.

Mr. Javed belongs to the Muhajir Qaumi Movement, which claims to represent Urdu-speaking settlers from India. No reaction from his party was immediately available.

Editorial Calls UN Gulf Resolution 'One-Sided'

BK0504130891 Karachi DAWN in English 5 Apr 91 p 11

[Editorial: "Ceasefire Resolution"]

[Text] The resolution adopted by the UN Security Council on Wednesday will go down as something unique in the annals of the United Nations. Never before has the world body acted with such remarkable unanimity to humble and punish an aggressor as it has done in the case of Saddam Husayn's Iraq. Apart from recognising the Iraq-Kuwait border as agreed upon in 1963 and assigning to Iraq the financial liability for the destruction caused by the war, the resolution lays down an elaborate procedure for unilateral arms cuts by Iraq under international supervision. The idea is to weaken Baghdad to such an extent that it should never be able to mount a war of aggression again or pose a threat to any country's security. Towards this end, there is also the provision for a UN force to monitor the peace. The resolution is so blatantly one-sided that one wonders if it can be the basis for permanent peace in the Gulf. Of course, Iraq should be prepared to pay the price for the insane adventurism of its megalomaniac leader. Given its unprovoked invasion of Kuwait and annexing the Emirate in the face of opposition from world opinion, Baghdad cannot expect to be spared by the powers whom it chose to defy. The manner in which the war against Iraq was conducted was clearly indicative of the fury and vengeance that drove Kuwait's coalition partners on. In such a situation, a humiliting resolution of this nature is not entirely unexpected, especially when the end of the cold war has made it almost certain that the superpowers will cooperate on the issue.

In view of the fact that president Saddam Husayn did not hesitate on a number of occasions to use chemical weapons to crush his opponents, the allies' move to dismantle his lethal arsenal is not without some logic. But an indiscriminate and arbitrary approach in the matter speaks of a total lack of understanding of the complexities of the Middle East's geopolitical and strategic compulsions as well as the psychology of the vanquished. If the United States, the driving force behind resolution 687, believes that it can neuralise Iraq for all time as a military or political force in the Middle East by crushing its national pride and by reducing it to the status of a pariah and a non-entity in international affairs, Washington could well be mistaken. Experience shows that militarily defeated nations can be kept on the leash and made to behave meekly and in full deference to the wishes of the victors only so long as they are not strong enough to throw off the yoke of domination. Once they manage to regain this strength and will, they invariably assert themselves and refuse to submit to the will of their perceived tormentors.

What is most disquieting about the approach adopted in the UN resolution is that it fails to take a broad view of the Middle East problem. President Saddam Husayn may not have [been] very sincere or realistic in linking the evacuation of his troops from Kuwait with the Palestinian question. But there was certainly a point in interrelating the Palestine issue, Arab-Israeli ties and America's role in the military confrontation with Iraq. The essential military balance that needs to be maintained in the Middle East, if there is to be peace and stability in the region, must be recognised. The destruction of a substantial part of Iraq's arms without the Palestinian problem being addressed is bound to upset the strategic equilibrium in the Middle East. Evidently, Israel will be the major beneficiary. It was forced to exercise restraint when its relations with Iraq were governed by a balance of terror. A vanquished Iraq will give Tel Aviv a freedom it has not known before. With Moscow out of the Middle East political scene as a

balancing actor, the U.S. and its Zionist protege will have the run of the place. In the long term this could prove highly destabilising.

Pakistani Radio Reports Atrocities in Kashmir

BK0904103691 Islamabad Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] The executive committee of Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association, Srinagar, in a preliminary report for UN Commission for Human Rights, has expressed deep concern over atrocities on people of occupied Kashmir by the Indian forces. The report says uninterrupted curfew has almost frozen the tempo of life, shoot-at- sight orders are fashion of the day, and the whole valley has been transformed into a torture cell. The report gives details of various towns where unarmed Kashmiris were made targets of indiscriminate firing by Indian troops. It further says that it is most shameful that paramilitary forces, taking advantage of their guns, mistreated and raped women at a number of places. In the torture cells, the report says, freedom fighters are made targets of unbelievable tortures under the excuse of investigation. The Indian troops have also started setting the houses ablaze and the administration in the held territory has forced media men to leave the held valley.

India Urged To Enter Dialogue on Kashmir

BK0904130491 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1100 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] The federal minister, Syed Fakhr Imam, has urged the Indian Government to enter into a substantial dialogue with Pakistan for a final settlement of the Jammu and Kashmir, a dispute recognized by the United Nations through its resolutions. He was winding up discussion in the National Assembly on two identical adjournment motions which were admitted on the fourth of this month. He said normalcy could return to the Kashmir valley if the UN resolutions are implemented and Kashmiris are allowed to exercise their right of ballot to decide their future. The minister assured the house that besides raising the Kashmir issue with India bilaterally, the Pakistan Government is committed to raise it at all international and multinational forums.

Taking part in the debate, the adviser on information and broadcasting, Sheikh Rashid Ahmad said the present freedom struggle in occupied Kashmir could no longer be defeated by any power. He urged those countries, who championed UN resolutions on Kuwait, to make similar efforts for implementation of UN resolution on Kashmir.

Earlier, the movers Mr. Liaqat Ali and Mian Mohammad Zaman strongly criticized the atrocities committed by the Indian forces on innocent Muslims who are fighting for their just cause of self- determination. They called for the adoption of a resolution by the National Assembly expressing solidarity with the Kashmiri people and urging the government to convene an ICO [Islamic Conference Organization] meeting on Kashmir.

The house will meet again on Thursday morning.

Commentary Views Outcome of Talks With India

BK0904120991 Islamabad Domestic Service in English 1600 GMT 8 Apr 91

[A.B.S. Jaffrey commentary: "Recent Pak-India Talks"]

[Text] In a bid to improve their strained relations, India and Pakistan Saturday signed two agreements pledging not to violate each other's airspace and to provide advance information about the movement of troops along the international border, according to reports from New Delhi. The two agreements were signed by the foreign secretaries of the two countries. They are part of the confidence-building measures being discussed by the two countries since last May.

These agreements are overall welcome, since such consensus is an undertandably routine matter between neighboring states, an exercise carried out some time (?routinely). As part of efforts to foster amicable relations between the two countries, the agreements would be most welcome where the people of the two countries are concerned, since they are by now thorougly fed up with the threat of confrontation hanging over their heads as a result of constantly strained relations between the two countries.

The benefits of these agreements being self-evident, we would like to point out that the situation in the Indian-held Kashmir is hardly conducive to the promotion of friendly relations between India and Pakistan. For many months now, the Kashmiri people have been subjected to untold miseries and atrocities in Indian-held Kashmir by the Indian security forces. As a consequence, a substantial portion of them have resorted to armed resistance to assert their inalienable right to self-determination. The need of the hour is that confrontation should stop and every chance provided for a negotiated settlement of the issue. Granted that the government of Chandra Shekhar is an interim body, the people in interim government have the power to call off the Indian security hunt in the occupied valley and strive for a political settlement. Try as one might, it is highly unacceptable that any government should endeavor to hold on to a territory, the people of which hold it in the [word indistinct] of hatred and contempt. These feelings could be altered to the benefit of India, if it were to give consideration to the desires and aspirations of the people of the part of Kashmir held by it by force. Farfetched as it may sound, the people of Kashmir might possibly forget New Delhi in due course of time but history never will.

It is also a very profound lesson to be learned from the experience of the Gulf war. It demonstrates in the most stinging manner possible that what a Third World country today needs most is to settle all their differences by peaceful means and also that the earlier they do so, the better.

Pakistan and India are, by comparison, far more populous countries than Iraq and Kuwait and some of their neighbors put together. If, God forbid, we fail to sort out our differences in the peaceful and civilized way, the other way is quite disgusting; and that should not only be avoided,

but it is also wholly avoidable given goodwill and good sense on the part of our two countries. What perhaps remains to be said is a word of friendly advice to whoever be in New Delhi. It is simple enough—please see the writing on the wall. People of the most modest intelligence and educational know-how know that justice has a way of prevailing over violence. The mills of God do grind dutifully slow, but also very very fine. Let us hope, the [words indistinct] the supreme God of the hundrends of millions of people of South Asia.

Paper Comments on Talks

BK0904125191 Islamabad THE PAKISTAN TIMES in English 9 Apr 91 p 4

[Editorial: "A Modest Beginning"]

[Text] At the conclusion of the fourth round of talks between the Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India at New Delhi, an agreement has been signed aimed at easing of tension between the two countries. It has been agreed that they would not violate the air space of each other and provide advance intimation of troop movements. Besides covering the entire range of bilateral issues the two sides exchanged views on international issues of mutual interest during the talks. It was also agreed in principle to resume talks on Siachen. The next round of talks is to be held in Islamabad towards the end of August or September this year. Prior to that the Indo-Pakistan committee to combat drug trafficking and smuggling is to meet in July this year.

Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India have been meeting from time to time to deal with the entire range of relations between the twp countries besides discussing specific problems. These meetings are a part of the on-going dialogue between India and Pakistan. However, these have only resulted in solving the momentary problems and not achieved anything ending up in a comprehensive treaty of friendship between the two countries, the present agreement signed by the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan can be regarded as a modest step towards improvement of relations between them. The need is to remove the deep rooted mistrusts and doubts bedevilling their ties. Pakistan lends moral support to the Kashmiris' freedom struggle, something which India persists in regarding as an interference in its internal affairs. It openly denies the right of self-determination to the Kashmiris in utter violation of the UN resolutions. Although the recently concluded agreement between the Foreign Secretaries can be welcomed because it prevents a sudden outbreak of war between the two countries, much more needs to be achieved to ensure a permanent friendship between them. Kashmir is at top of the list. Unless it is resolved in accordance with the wishes and aspirations of the people who inhabit that area, tension would persist on the borders of the two countries. Allegations of Pakistan's involvement in the struggle for freedom now raging in Kashmir are baseless considering the fact that the entire valley was on strike to protest against the talks between the Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan. What is going on in occupied Kashmir today is an indigenous uprising and needs no spur from outside. It is a long standing problem, accepted as such by the entire world, and needs a permanent solution in accordance with the wishes of the local people. If that is done, and also the issues of Wullar Barrage and Siachen are settled, only then can we expect a true and lasting friendship with India.

Editorial on Pakistan's Need for Afghan Solution

BK0604151391 Lahore THE NATION in English 6 Apr 91 p 6

[Editorial: "Pushing Afghan Solution"]

[Text] Following high-level discussions on the Afghan situation, Islamabad has reportedly opted for pursuing a political settlement. The fall of Khowst to the mujahidin could have tilted opinion in favour of a military option, since there has always been a sizeable and vocal opinion of hardliners opposing any compromise solution. The Peshawar-based mujahidin groups, notwithstanding their enduring factional rivalries and inability to adopt a unified stance, have been insisting that they would rather go the whole hog to secure a military victory than agree to a power-sharing arrangement with the Kabul regime. But, since they were not able to match their words with deeds not managing to win even a single significant battle in the post-Soviet withdrawal period, there has not of late been much enthusiasm for a military solution. The Jalalabad debacle was perhaps the turning point when the hawks predicting a swift collapse of the Kabul regime following the Soviet pull-out were proven wrong and the doves were able to sell negotiated settlement as the only viable option. The Khowst victory has indeed been a major success for the mujahidin and should be a morale-booster for their strife-ridden ranks. It should also help them to rejuvenate world interest in their almost forgotten cause. And if they are able to sustain their control over the strategic town, they would have substantially enhanced their bargaining power in any future negotiations. Nevertheless, winning one battle should not lead to any miscalculations about the war front and there is all the more reason to guard against getting wrong signals.

The high-powered Afghan cell by deciding to step up diplomatic efforts for the setting up of a broad-based government in Kabul has taken the right course. It is not only consistent with Islamabad's post-Geneva Accords official stance, but also an imperative of the emergent global scene. Notwithstanding the need for a just and equitable settlement which is acceptable to all the parties concerned, Pakistan cannot afford to have a perennial source of conflict along its frontiers. To secure peace in the region is a dictate of Pakistan's national interest and calls for renewed and more vigorous efforts to seek a political solution to the Afghan problem. In the wake of superpowers' detente and the declining US interest in the Afghan resistance, Islamabad has been much lagging behind in taking the sort of initiatives needed to break the stalement. If it has now come alive to the problem, it should be willing to make a meaningful effort and not take it up as one of the Foreign Office's routine diplomatic drills. To begin with let the country have a full-time Foreign Minister as the peace process calls for a

political direction and its success largely depends on reviewing some of the major policy perceptions of the past.

Premier Meets PRC Envoy, Stresses Ties

BK0904060291 Islamabad Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 9 Apr 91

[Text] Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said that Pakistan and China are determined to maintain regional and international peace and stability because this is the basic prerequisite for economic development and the people's welfare. Nawaz Sharif said this to Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Tian Ding, who called on him in Islamabad last evening. The prime minister said the Pakistan-China relationship is playing an important role in maintaining peace and stability in the region. Pakistan attaches great importance to the Pakistan-China relationship, and it has primary status in Pakistan's foreign policy. Recalling his recent successful visit to China where he was given a warm welcome, Nawaz Sharif said he had useful talks with the Chinese leaders. He told the Chinese ambassador to convey his best wishes to Prime Minister Li Peng and other Chinese leaders. Nawaz Sharif expressed appreciation for the Chinese ambassador's role in increasing and strengthening mutual cooperation between the two countries.

Sri Lanka

Rockets for Taiwan Air Force Detained on Ship

BK1004143091 Hong Kong AFP in English 0918 GMT 7 Apr 91

[Text] Colombo, April 7 (AFP)—A cargo of rocket parts detained on board a Cook island-owned ship at the main harbour here was destined for the Taiwan Air Force, press reports said Sunday. The M.V. Mathalina was detained on arrival here March 21 because its skipper failed to declare the cargo of some 11,000 propellent parts of air-to-ground rockets in line with local regulations.

The SUNDAY TIMES said a customs investigation showed the cargo was on its way to Taiwan for that country's air force. The newspaper said the mystery surrounding the ship and its explosive cargo was being cleared but "some questions still remained unanswered because Sri Lanka has no diplomatic ties with Taiwan."

The ship had sailed from Zebrugge in Belgium where the cargo was loaded. Customs officials were not immediately available for comment.

The skipper had told investigators that he did not declare the cargo because the ship was just docking in Colombo on an unscheduled call for bunkering. According to customs regulations here, any ship calling at the Colombo port declare its cargo [as received]. However, customs maintain no such declaration was made by the skipper of the M. V. Mathalina.

Seizure of 17 Trawlers Discussed With Maldives

BK0704095491 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0800 GMT 7 Apr 91

["Oana/Pool item]

[Text] Colombo, 7 Apr (LANKAPUVATH)—Top-level diplomatic talks are now on between Sri Lanka and the Maldives for the release of 170 Sri Lankan fishermen reported to have been found fishing within the Maldivian territorial waters in a flotilla of 17 high-powered fishing trawlers, states a report in the SUNDAY OBSERVER by Nicholas Candappa. Official sources said that Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Harold Herath and Maldivian Foreign Minister Fathulla Jameel were in direct touch in a bid to release the 170 fishermen.

The relatives of these fishermen have made a special appeal to the government saying that they were now on the brink of starvation as their bread-winners were away from home, in detention in Maldives faced with the threat of banishment in an island in the Maldives. A government source said the 17 trawlers with the 170 men aboard had been accosted straying into Maldivian waters known to be a rich fishing-ground.

"They have most probably gone in a convoy or flotilla in very powerful boats. Maldivian authorities say they were fishing in their waters and had caught a big haul of fish. This was one of the richest fishing grounds in the Maldives. The Maldives normally apply the law strictly for all and in the past a number of Bangladeshi and Thai fishermen had been caught and dealt with according to the Maldivian law", a top government source said. "This is a big problem and we are making intense diplomatic moves to get them back. How far we will succeed we do not know", the source added.

Representations have been made and the argument they are making that "they were carried away there by a storm" is untenable considering the kind of power boats they had used.

"The Sri Lankan Government is concerned because there is a very powerful fishing lobby in the Maldives. They are a vociferous group and are pressuring their government to take stern action. They will have to go through court procedure where the boats will probably be confiscated, and may be they will have to serve a jail term unless the Maldivian Government is very magnanimous", a top government source said.

Army Kills 107 Tamil Guerrillas

BK1004112291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1032 GMT 10 Apr 91

[Text] Colombo, April 10 (AFP)—Security forces backed by helicopters smashed two Tamil guerrilla bases in lightning raids in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, killing 105 rebels and losing four soldiers, officials here said Wednesday.

Two more guerrillas of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) were gunned down in eastern Batticaloa region in a third battle, raising the overnight separatist-related death toll to 111, a military spokesman said. Defence Secretary General Cyril Ranatunga told reporters here that security forces "swept through" an LTTE-controlled area in Manthai during an overnight operation, killing at least 60 guerrillas.

"We swept through Manthai and have set up an operational base there," the general said, adding that four soldiers were wounded in the offensive. However in the east, four soldiers were killed in a lightning assault on an LTTE base at Thoppigala, Gen. Ranatunga said. He said 30 guerrillas were killed in that offensive on Tuesday.

A military spokesman here said 15 more rebels were killed during a follow up operation in Thoppigala where the LTTE had its command and control centre for the eastern region. "It was a lightning raid. We killed 30 on Tuesday night and another 15 during follow up operations this morning. We lost four soldiers killed and 12 wounded," the spokesman said.

He said elite troops trained in anti-guerrilla warfare were used in the operation and they also received support from helicopters mounted with medium machine guns. Several weapons and explosives were seized from the jungle base. General Ranatunga said there had been an upsurge of violence across the embattled northeastern region, partly because security forces were now on an "offensive defence."

"A soldier is not going to sit inside the camp till he gets killed. Security forces have found that they have to go on an offensive defence," the general said, adding that the LTTE had also stepped up its attacks on security forces. He said an estimated 500 to 700 LTTE men had been killed in northwestern Mannar and northern Karainagar regions alone since February 17 while security force casualties for the same period were 111 soldiers killed 187 wounded.

At Karainagar, the LTTE "rained" the main northern naval base located there with mortars and rockets, but security forces have repulsed the attack, Gen. Ranatunga said. He said more than a dozen security personnel had died in the fighting around the strategic naval facility while LTTE men had been driven out of their mortar bomb launching positions just outside the base.

However, he said sporadic mortar attacks with longer range weapons were still continuing and a few buildings inside the camp had been damaged. Government troops are battling LTTE guerrillas who are trying to establish an independent homeland for the island's two million Tamil minority concentrated in the northeast.

More than 6,310 people have died in bitter fighting since 14 months of secret peace talks between the LTTE and Colombo ended in failure leading to the guerrillas' resuming their violent campaign. Army commandos carried out another attack on an LTTE hideout in northeastern Weli Oya region Wednesday, killing five rebels and losing one commando, a military source here said.

"Troops captured five guns and the bodies of the five LTTE men killed in the battle. One commando was also killed," a military source said. He said sporadic fighting was raging Wednesday in two areas of northwest Mannar and northern Vavuniya districts. Details were not immediately available.

Security Forces Killed Over 500 Rebels Last Month

BK0704091691 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0807 GMT 7 Apr 91

["Oana/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 7 Apr (LANKAPUVATH)—Latest official statistics show that 518 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists have been confirmed killed by the security forces in the last one month in fighting in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH 83 members of the security forces have also been killed by the LTTE during this period.

Thirty one civilian men, women and children were murdered by the LTTE. The largest number confirmed of LTTE killed in a single battle was 115 at Silvatturai from March 19 to 23.

Meanwhile, official sources said a dawn to dusk curfew was imposed today in the districts of Jaffna and Mullaitivu as the security forces heightened operations against the LTTE. The curfews in the districts of Mannar and Vavuniya continue except in Mannar island and Vavuniya town.

Official sources said government troops backed by air cover have overrun the terrorist lines on the outer perimeter of the Karainagar naval base and are now pushing the LTTE out of the island of Karaitivu linked to mainland Jaffna to by a causeway.

Official sources also said the Army's Jaffna commander Brigadier Vijaya Wimalaratne received a slight muscle injury on his leg from debris caused by a exploding Pasilan bomb, when he was directing frontline operations, as government troops overran terrorist bunkers, outside the Karainagar naval base. An Army foot patrol successfully fought off an attack by 80-100 terrorists Saturday night on the Ampara-Batticaloa border, killing two LTTE military area leaders and wounding three seriously.

A number of LTTE cadres were killed by government troops in a confrontation at Karadiyanaru in Batticaloa in which one soldier was killed and five wounded. The bodies of eight terrorists were handed over by security forces to the I.C.R.C. [International Committee of the Red Cross] at the Vavuniya government hospital. One terrorist was killed at Pesalai in Mannar and a 36 mills handgrenade recovered [sentence as received].